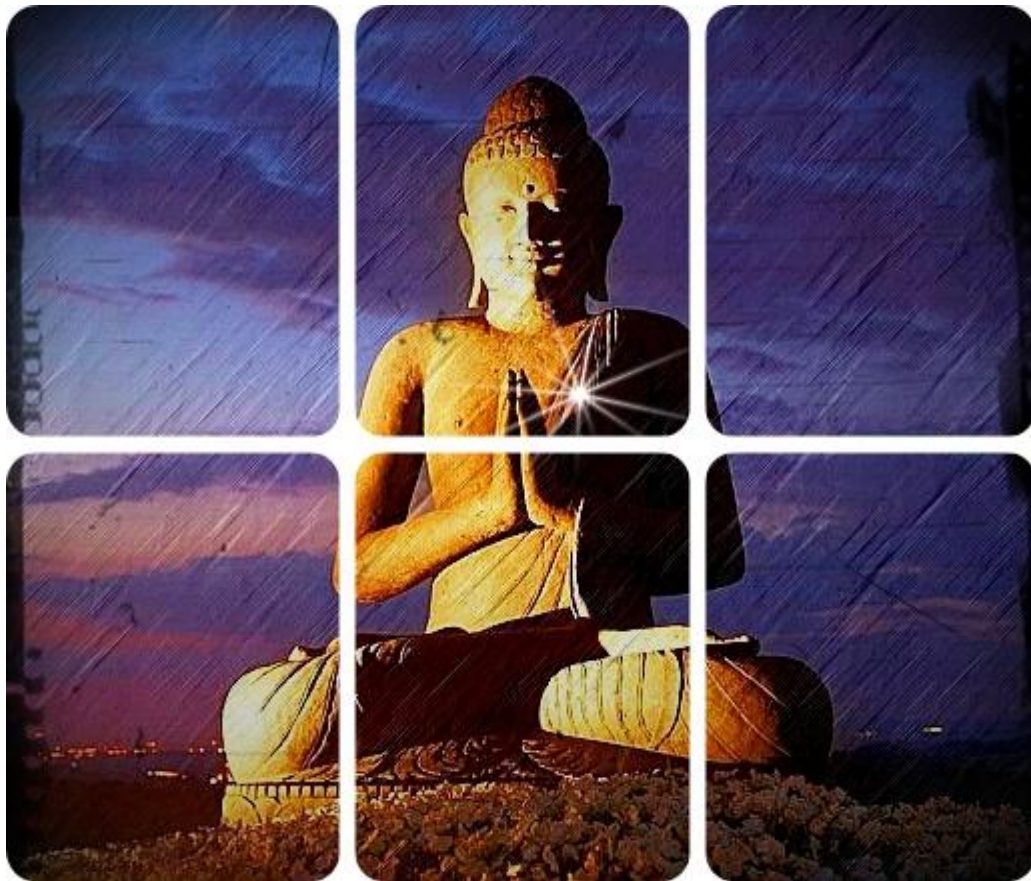


Meditate

365



Br. Pho Quan
(Roberto Vicente)

Introduction

Being skeptical, I was surprised during my first meditation how the activity level in my mind dropped as the inner voice echoing in my head quieted down as well as how relaxed I felt. In this revealing moment I knew that I would dedicate the rest of my life to meditation and its benefits. Later I became a Buddhist monk living a monastic life. I have held true to my goal of sharing the rewards that Insight Meditation can bring to anyone's life. All that need be done is to make the effort for a regular sitting practice and have the dedication to sit in awareness as a patient understanding emerges. In this way life's true nature is experienced.

For thousands of years men and women have brought calm and well being to their lives through meditation, yet this basic tranquility only served as a general 'feel good' relief and short-lived happiness. 2,500 years ago Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, began a quest seeking to understand his own life situation and challenges as well as humanity's greater suffering. Through a 'Middle Way' approach, the Buddha went on to apply Insight Meditation (a trio of connected present moment contemplations—breath awareness meditation—*anapanasati*; concentration meditation—*jhana* absorption; and insight-wisdom meditation viewing and putting life into perspective—*vipassana bhavana*) as a tool which guided him to profound realizations about life, to know the causes of as well as suffering's end and liberation.

Meditate 365 offers a daily, progressing meditation schedule. This first helps the newcomer to meditation develop a consistent and regular practice, leading to firsthand realizations and insights, and on to the wisdom of a mature practitioner. It is important to not jump ahead through the meditations but, rather, to establish a foundation of increasing, personal understanding and insight. The fourth week of each month offers 'life practice' as a practical conclusion to each month's meditation theme. While a daily meditation is offered, one shouldn't feel rushed or obliged to continue at the daily pace, but find it more rewarding to take the time to repeat a meditation as a deepening experience.

Imagine a jigsaw puzzle with many thousands of pieces, the puzzle picture reflecting life. Through the unifying practice and experience of Insight Meditation and Middle Way appreciation, one begins to recognize and join the pieces as clarity and wisdom for the true nature of life and reality slowly emerges. Each person applies the same useful meditations but because their lives and experiences are unique, the puzzle pieces join together differently. The outcome is still the same—the end of self-related suffering and liberation.

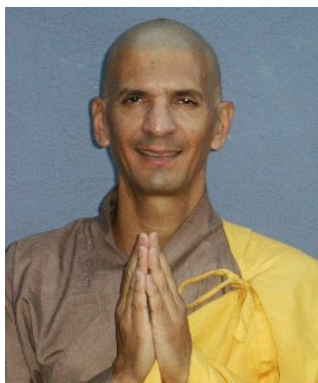
I was taken with questions on how best to proceed with one's practice. Here I've placed in chronological, ascending order and maturing meditative experience and wisdom, the practice as expressed in the discourses of the Theravada Pali Canon. Through a systematic approach of conduct, concentration and wisdom, Insight

Meditation and the Middle Way guidance offer a profound and fulfilling experience. You go from being carelessly and impulsively driven by strong-willed habits to having understanding and, finally, to a penetrating wisdom and liberating peace. While here in the west we refer to the practice as meditation, in ancient India meditation was thought of as 'mind cultivation' (bhavana). The mind, experiences and discernment are applied as an inward reflection rather than searching outside one's self for gratification or answers.

I wish to acknowledge the profound influence of Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi for sharing and clearly expounding the Dharma Wisdom here in the west. The dust has been lifted from the eyes of many.

I am grateful to the generosity of the late Rick Bolton. Thank you, Ricky, for your friendship, sharing and 'dana.'

Brother Pho Quan



Brother Pho Quan, 'Universal Contemplation' (Roberto Vicente) took vows in 2002. His early Buddhist experience was with local temples and retreat centers in the San Francisco Bay Area. He has been influenced by Jack Kornfield and Spirit Rock Meditation Center as well as Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi. Brother has a BA degree (CSUS 1979). His emphasis is the practice and fundamentals as expressed and experienced through the Pali Canon discourses (please visit www.accesstoinsight.org).

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May this humble Dharma offering serve as guidance and may all come to know wisdom and peace in their lives.

The Pali Canon (Discourses of the Buddha)

- AN: Anguttara Nikaya—The Numbered Discourses**
DN: Digha Nikaya—The Long Collection of Discourses
DH: Dhammapada—The Path of the Dharma
IT: Itivuttaka—‘This was said’ Collection of Sutras
MN: Majjhima Nikaya—The Middle Length Discourses
SN: Samyutta Nikaya—The Grouped Collection of Discourses
THERAG: Theragatha—Verses of the Elder Monks
THERIG: Therigatha—Verses of the Elder Nuns
UD: Udana—Exclamations
VN: Vinaya Pitaka—The Monastic Code Collection

The Sanskrit usage of words and phrases has been adopted since they are readily used and referred to by the modern audience (i.e. sutra, Dharma, karma, Nirvana, etc.).

**MEDITATE 365—
Insight Meditation and
The Middle Way Experience
To Wisdom and Liberation**

JANUARY—Bringing Meditation to Your Life

FEBRUARY—From Monkey Mind to Concentration to Wise Actions

MARCH—The Impermanence of Life-Actions

APRIL—The Makings of Self and Non-self Freedom

**MAY—The Kaleidoscope of Karma,
The Compelling Motives Leading to Action**

JUNE—Conditions Arising, the Becoming of Everything

**JULY— The Four Noble Truths,
The Wisdom Penetrating Self and the End of Self Suffering**

**AUGUST and SEPTEMBER—The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path
Deliverance to Suffering's End**

OCTOBER— Stream Entry Passage to Final Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance

NOVEMBER—An Accomplished One—Noble, Perfect and Wise

DECEMBER—The Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana

JANUARY— Bringing Meditation to Your Life



There is a joke about a man with shoulder pain who goes to the doctor. “Every time I do this it hurts.” The man rolls his shoulder forward grimacing. The doctor answers, “Well, stop doing that!” The simple cure for your problems and troubles is stopping. Meditation puts on the brakes to a hectic, demanding life and is a timeout from habitual behavior.

What, me meditate? Go on, I don’t meditate! Where would I find the time? But without realizing, you have been meditating your whole life. There isn’t a day that goes by that one hasn’t meditated.

Sitting stopped in bumper-to-bumper traffic and staring off into space. Taking a hot shower and standing there unwinding. Flopping down on the couch and spacing out for a moment. What happened in those settled moments? Believe it or not, you were meditating and disengaged from self-absorbed ways.

There are misconceptions about meditation. Thoughts of a white-haired bearded guru sitting in a contorted position alone in a cave come to mind. There are unwarranted fears of cult groups and brain washing. But meditation has nothing to do with these oddities and everything to do with having a simple grounded and present awareness. This is the ‘work’ of meditation; to be at ease, to know one’s self, and to better appreciate life.

January shares a first time experience with meditation with each subsequent month building on the previous as a realized insight progression. Here will be emphasized and practiced ‘centering’ (or body scan) as a brief warm-up to meditation, proper posture and sitting position, becoming aware of the present moment through realizing the breath’s quality as well as recognizing the body/mind communication to

release stress. Cultivated is a deepening awareness. A Middle Way appreciation is known along with patience (the Middle Way avoids the impulsiveness for indulgence and gratification and also aggression and hostility, but is rather a 'middle' awareness removed from everyday extremes). By connecting with and following the breath, body language and thoughts, an inward reflection is established. You go from quick-to-respond overwhelming habits to a Middle Way recognition for life.

Revealed through the focus of meditation and starting with the simple awareness of the breath's quality, a journey like none other is begun. Options and choices, goodwill and caring, concentration and insight are developed. Wisdom comes gradually through a sensitive and experienced understanding. In the months to come, profound truths are realized—an intuitive reflection, understanding, and discernment for the true nature of life far removed from the normal self-routine is known. Insight Meditation leads to nothing less than liberation from habitually directed actions overcoming suffering ways.

January 1—Beginning to Meditate*

“Wisdom springs from meditation; without meditation wisdom wanes. Having known these two paths of progress and decline, let a man so conduct himself that his wisdom may increase.” DH 282

Preparing to sit, one just doesn't flop down to meditate and go into a zombie-like trance. For example, when a hen sits to roost it makes a turn in a small circle, pecks around, and fluffs itself as it finds the 'right spot.' Before meditating you, too, need to get comfortable and stretch to get all the kinks, tension and stiffness out of the body. If meditating in a hall or temple it is best to stretch outside before entering so as not to disturb other practitioners. Wear loose-fitting clothing that isn't restricting and made of cotton fabrics that 'breathes' is helpful. Feel free to loosen a belt, undo a few shirt or blouse buttons, roll up sleeves and be relaxed. Many people bow at the waist with their hands together before their sitting place as a sign of respect and to compose themselves.

A welcomed timeout from all activities, work and demands, meditation isn't just one more thing to rush through. Quite the opposite, the sitting is an actual comfort, ease, joy and settling as well as insight. Resist the temptation to look at a watch or over at the clock. Meditation takes one away from automatic tendencies. Attention is turned towards a present minded connection to better know life.

The normal position is to sit cross-legged on a soft cushion (reasonably priced meditation cushions can be found on the internet), making for a comfortable and mindful position. Quietly fluff up the cushion to sit with the back half of the buttocks on the cushion. This evenly disperses pressure over and through the pelvis, hips and small of the back. But if not physically able to sit cross-legged then begin by sitting in a chair without leaning against the back support. It is important to keep a straight yet relaxed posture to help bring a grounded presence to the sitting. If suffering from severe back problems, feel free to lie down on the floor with a pillow under the knees to take the strain off the back.

When meditating it is easy to slouch. Sit up so that you are comfortable, shoulders drawn back slightly. In this way the chest is somewhat out and exposed. Now with the spine straight, allow the shoulders and back muscles to relax and settle as the

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upper body weight to align and rest naturally at the waist. This centered position helps prevent the back from stiffening and aching. Allow the shoulders to drop and relax. Rest with hands cupped on the lap, left hand under the right. A too-erect posture makes for a meditation that is uncomfortable and agonizing. Now sitting relaxed, take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to settle down.

Here you are sitting in the present moment calmly aware. Daily activities have a way of charging the body and thoughts, but applying the technique of 'centering' (also referred to as access meditation), 'warm-up' to the meditative moment to connect with the present. Begin by sensing the forehead. Is it wrinkled and tense? Are the eyebrows arched? If so, simply relax and release. Are you squinting or are the corners of the eyes tightly closed? Are lips tightly pursed? Smile gently. Notice whether you are grinding your teeth or if the jaw is tightly clenched. Now relax the jaw, allowing it to part naturally with a slight space between the upper and lower jaw. Feel how facial muscles stretch and relax. Finally, lowering the chin down at a slight angle takes pressure off the neck and spine to make for a more comfortable sitting. Remember, smile and relax while breathing, but also smile and relax through your thoughts as well.

As though carrying a great burden or weight on the shoulders, without realizing it back muscles tend to arch and stiffen. Allow the shoulders to drop and arms to hang freely with hands cupped at the lap. Note, too, if there is any pelvic tension or clenching in this lower area. Be relaxed. Smile and take a few deep breaths. Feel at ease. Connect with the relief that meditating allows.

Slowly moving down, have awareness for the chest and any pressure there. Breathe naturally and freely. Feel the lungs filling, the diaphragm expanding then the lungs deflating as the abdomen drops and the breath is expelled.

Notice whether abdominal muscles are clenched and tight. Think of the abdomen as something soft and flexible, allowing the muscles to relax with the meditation. Enjoy the meditative time out and get away from the compulsion to always be busy.

Note the mind and thoughts. Usually at the start of a meditation, pressing thoughts and demands carry over from earlier in the day to flash and distract. Feel how a thought brings pressure to the forehead as well as behind the eyes. Try to relax the mind from actually squeezing and gripping the thought. If the mind continues to be distracted, taking in a few deep breaths through the nostrils will help reestablish meditative calm. Acknowledge how the body and mind communicate. With each thought and emotion there is a corresponding physical tension and sometimes pain. An accumulation of self related stress and pressure builds up. Work, family, the commute, errands, conflicts and day-to-day challenges are reflected in a tense breath, tightened muscles and disturbed thinking. Everyday life takes a toll. Greed,

hatred and confusion stand out as reactive impulses. Try to relax and allow the pressures to empty out.

Here you have taken the time to allow for meditation to settle down. Expressing a willingness to reflect and look deeper, meditation puts you in a position to better understand life. Don't be in a hurry. A centering warm-up can take anywhere between 10 to 20 minutes to become comfortable and at ease. Feel as channels of awareness and a sensitive appreciation for the body and mind open. Meditation is a present personal realization. Sit relaxed and enjoy the calm moment. Settling down, you begin to breathe more freely. Once 'centered,' longer and deeper meditation sessions will follow. After finishing, don't be in a hurry to get back to being busy. Acknowledge the settling relief meditation affords. Feel how tension and stress are released. The calm and awareness begins carrying over to life in general.

The timeout feels good. I let go of a lot of stress. I didn't know there was so much tension over my face. I feel relaxed. Sitting has made me feel better. There's more to meditation than I first imagined.

January 2—The Everyday Breath and the Insightful Breath*

“Mindfulness of in-and-out breathing, when developed and pursued, is of great fruit, of great benefit.” MN 118

Are you breathing? Of course I’m breathing, you say. I’d be turning blue if I wasn’t! This is reassuring, but are you sure you are always breathing? There is an actual recognition and connection with the breath. Drawn in air fills the lungs and the oxygen is absorbed, the heart beats to distribute the oxygen, the blood then circulates the energy through the body, while the breath then is expelled. Don’t have worry about the intricate physiology but know, in fact, that you are breathing. Considering it boring and commonplace, if you stopped breathing this very moment, the breath’s importance would all at once be realized.

Having awareness of the breath *does* make a difference. You *do* breathe differently when aware. Known is relief from self-centered habits and impulsive reactions. All this and much more are recognized through the course of the breath. When unaware of the breath you don’t know where you are, what you are thinking or doing and, ultimately, where you are headed in life. The simple act of appreciating the breath is a detour from the doctor’s office and a medicine cabinet filled with prescriptions as well as sleepless nights and ongoing personal problems. Realize two conflicting and unique experiences—the everyday breath and the insightful breath.

An intuitive barometer revealing both physical and mental well being as well as the communication between the body and mind, the breath’s awareness is a personal experience and relates to better understanding life. Whether anxious, sad, happy or relieved, watch as the breath reveals underlying emotions and thoughts. Insight Meditation is a natural recognition and therapy bringing self-inclined habits under control. A Middle Way appreciation not absorbed or dominated by self extremes is revealed.

The everyday breath is felt as tense facial expressions, clenched jaw, arched shoulders, compressed chest, knotted abdomen and pelvic pressure. Panic, fear, insecurity, low self-esteem, doubt, anger, jealousy, desire, hatred and confusion are also a part of the everyday breath. Follow how the breath is dominated and conditioned by self-centered actions as conflicts rage. Accumulated self-related pressures and tensions dominate.

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In contrast, settled through meditation, the insightful breath is revealing—natural, open, easy flowing and presently aware. Guided by a calm awareness and recognition of the present moment, begin to note how the insightful breath opens to a gradual familiarization for an ongoing self-centered tug-of-war.

Purposely initiated through meditation but carried over to all aspects of life, Insight Meditation is a Middle Way appreciation. Self related impulses on the other hand are a conflict to gratify and indulge or be aggressive and hostile. Connected through the breath's quality, the Middle Way approach is a clarifying experience. Slowly begin to reconnect with life and reality through patience, concern, and an awareness that isn't self-obsessed.

Insight Meditation centers around four areas of present-minded appreciation—the body (of which the breath is part) and material forms; feelings as pleasant, painful and neutral experiences; the mind and mental states; and life-actions as passing phenomena in general is recognized. Here the Middle Way appreciation serves as a mindful connection.

Present awareness for the body—Focused, alert and mindful, with the breath as the starting point revealing a charged biology, follow as meditation connects bringing familiarity for the body. For all its remarkable biology, the body weakens and isn't to be identified as self, but through an underlying insight that all moments and experiences are short-lived and impermanent. The four general postures of walking, standing as well as lying down are carefully noted. Through a Middle Way appreciation life is revealed as so many conditions arising rather than self-obsessed.

Present awareness for feelings—Focused, alert and mindful, feelings arise with each and every moment as either pleasant, painful or neutral experiences. Follow Insight Meditation as a witness and observer, rather than attaching to pleasant feelings, rejecting painful episodes, or ignoring neutral moments. Attentive without indulging or judging the feeling, view their arising and fading as short-lived. Through a Middle Way appreciation life is revealed as so many conditions arising rather than self-obsessed.

Present awareness for the mind and mental states—Focused, alert and mindful, judgments, bias, attachments as well as indifference, stop to realize self related greed, hatred or confusion. Relate to the short-lived passing nature of thoughts. Through a Middle Way appreciation life is revealed as conditions rather than self-obsessed.

Present awareness for life-action or phenomena—Focused, alert and mindful, follow how life flows as actions and experiences arise and fade. Through a Middle

Way appreciation life is revealed as so many conditions arising rather than self-obsessed.

Comfortable in your sitting position, lower jaw dropped allowing facial muscles to stretch and relax, shoulders down and back muscles relaxed, abdomen softened and pelvic pressure at ease, a centering warm-up and body scan are settling.

Acknowledge any clenching and tension to relax the physical strain. Meditation is a moment without distractions, preoccupations and demands. Now gently guide your awareness to the most obvious feeling and sensation—the breath's quality. Feel the initial restlessness and unsettling when first sitting to meditate. Charged by strong impulses, note how wanting, disliking, judgments, fears and fantasies actually are a stressful strangle hold. One goes through the day distracted, confused and overwhelmed. The upset then translates to nervousness and a frustrated, pressure-filled gasping for air. Self-domination is a triangle of conflict—a struggle with desire, overwhelmed by hatred, and confused by doubts (these emotions play out on dormant, active and transgressing levels). Judging, craving after and at odds, you are your own worst enemy.

Begin to feel the subtle shift away from self-exhausting habits to a Middle Way appreciated calm awareness. Without demands or deadlines, meditation is a restful relief. Acknowledge the ease, calm and meditative relief. Relax and release the buildup of stifling energies.

Following the breath, the compulsive and all too critical personality stops. Calmly follow each passing breath through an intuitive awareness. Without bearing down, acknowledge the detachment. The self-attitude goes on to gradually weaken. Experience the Middle Way separation from impulsiveness and aggression. Without reacting, one is presently aware and reflective rather than judgmental. Sense how self-tormenting ways begin to free up and disperse.

Note the shift away from a self-perspective to an intuitive calm recognition. As an awareness experience you are open, at ease, alert and patient. Feel as the mind settles and self-identification falls away. Follow how the breath brings about a deepened appreciation for life.

It's good to meditate. My mind slows down as I follow the breath. I feel lighter, relaxed and settled. My attention has cleared. Amazingly, I sense myself letting go. It isn't very often that I feel this quiet and settled. I didn't realize so many habits and pressures were raging inside me.

January 3—Present Moment Awareness*

“Whatever quality is present you clearly see right there. He remains focused on the body...feelings...mind...mental qualities in and of themselves—ardent, alert, and mindful—putting aside greed and distress...” MN 131

Cross-legged on a cushion or sitting in a chair, meditation is a present recognition—calm, settled, observing and aware. Guide your awareness to the breath’s quality (whether long or short breaths, deep or fast moving as when first sitting). Acknowledge any ‘hot spots’ over the body (facial muscles drawn, jaw clenched, shoulders hunched, abdominal muscles tight or clenching at the pelvic area). Feel how the meditative timeout is soothing. A calm meditative experience, follow the present recognition for the breath, body, feelings, mind and life-actions.

In touch with the present moment after a centering warm-up and body scan, (lower jaw unhinged stretching the facial muscles, shoulders down and back relaxed, stomach muscles softened, hands cupped on the lap), note how you come to meditate after a stressful day. Acknowledge the breath’s subtle qualities. Get comfortable and slowly settle down. A self actor obsession keeps one on edge, busy and frustrated.

How is the body feeling? What stands out? Sense the coolness of the breath entering through the nostrils and passing at the back of the throat, flowing then into the lungs and the uplift of the diaphragm. Is there pressure at the lower back, abdomen, or pelvic area? Acknowledge the present moment. As a Middle Way appreciation, become familiar with the breath’s qualities as well as the body, experiencing the moment and how it fluctuates.

Feel how the centering technique helps settle the habits of desire, hatred and confusion. Acknowledge the shift from everyday impulsiveness to insight awareness; from neglect and carelessness to a settled and focused recognition for life. Like viewing a painting in a museum, appreciate the overall picture, tone, details and quality of the breath, body, feelings, mind and life-actions. As a present recognition, follow how feelings and sensations arise and then go on to fade. Note how the body relaxes and the mind settles down. Feel how the breath reflects the communication and interaction between the body and mind. Relaxing to pull back from the focus strain of the thought, note how the breath settles. Like a clenched muscle, gently allow the mind to open, release and expand. In gradual increments

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feel how a thought is released. Allow accumulated tension-filled habits to disperse rather than judge or battle with the moment. Note how awareness broadens to a settled concentration. Recognize the divisiveness brought about by self-attachments.

Applying a Middle Way appreciation, attentive rather than neglectful or scatter brained, the breath's quality is the one and only focus. If distracted, note the corresponding tension and pressure felt in and around the forehead as well as the back of the eyes. Meditating after a long day at work, the mind can take extra time to settle down to the simple present moment connection. Insight Meditation follows the actions and expressions of one's life; from self-dominated to a clarified appreciation.

Separating from self-preoccupation, begin to feel and acknowledge the joy and relief meditation allows. Follow the moment without judgment or criticism. Realize the open awareness that is a Middle Way appreciated detachment. There is pressure in the leg or back, or the mind may wander off, but relax to reconnect with the moment. Appreciate the many feelings. Note the habitual tendency to search, be busy or judge in contrast with the Middle Way reflection and a relaxed present awareness.

Watching, feeling, knowing—I'm aware. I'm seeing things from a different perspective, not just as a knee-jerk response. My mind quiet, I settle down to see how stress overwhelms me.

January 4—Sitting in the Present Moment*

“He remains focused on the body...feelings...mind...mental qualities in and of themselves—ardent, alert, and mindful—putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world.” MN 118

Take a moment to refresh and connect with the present moment through a centering warm-up and awareness for the breath’s quality. Whatever the situation, be in the here and now. Meditation is a joining with life rather than rushing through and missing it all together. Again, in terms of meditation, the present moment is a fourfold appreciation: the body (the breath as a grounded physical connection); feelings (whether pleasant, painful or neutral); mind (discursive thoughts and mental reactions); and life-actions (as moments, circumstances and experiences). Through a connected awareness, the self-distracted sideshow settles down. Only as a quiet, clear awareness is life and reality known. Obscured by a self-centered bias, follow the breath and mind as a personal recognition for life.

Settle into a comfortable sitting position. Allow the shoulders, back and spine to align and relax at the waist. Before beginning a body scan, take a moment to acknowledge the surroundings as well as how you are feeling. Realize the moment without any demands or distractions. Note the present feeling and thoughts—happy, tired, distracted, at ease, worried or calm. Join with the breath, body, feelings, mind and life-actions. This is the true present. Note the posture, along with the body’s pressures and sensations. Breathe and smile gently.

Starting at the head, begin a body scan. Sense the facial features. Notice whether there is any tension at the forehead (even the sinus cavities can ache with pressure). Allow the facial muscles to relax. Often without realizing it one is squinting. Simply try to relax the eyes, feeling how sensitive the eyelids are. Smile as you breathe. Unclench the jaw. Absent minded teeth may be ground. Feel the facial muscles stretching and relaxing. Allow the chin to drop just a bit to take pressure off the neck. Be at ease, breathe freely and naturally while smiling. Enjoy the meditation. Swallow a few times to help clear the throat muscles. Feel how the breath enters the nostrils then passes coolly along the back of the throat. Slowly allow self-accumulated stress to release.

Now at the shoulders, allow the arms to drop at the sides and back muscles to relax. As though carrying the weight of the world, you have been preoccupied by many

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activities and the body follows to tense up. Relax and allow the stress to dissolve. Feel how habit energies release.

Note whether the chest is tight. Oftentimes pressure fills the body as a heavy vacuum. Now relax the diaphragm and breathe naturally. Simply allow the breath to flow on its own.

Moving further down, allow abdominal muscles to relax as the breath enters and moves through the body then affects the abdominal cavity. Allow these core muscles and organs to relax. Note whether the pelvic area is strained or the buttocks clenched. Breathe gently to relax these areas.

Breathing through the nose, take 5-7 deep settling breaths. Feel how the lungs fill, then naturally exhale the breath. The breath connects with the body as well as mental states. Breathe freely and smile. Meditation is a calming recognition and appreciation for life. In touch and presently connected, take nothing for granted but join with life.

Imagine yourself like a topped-off hourglass. Slowly begin to empty and release the press and tension from the demanding activities of work, family, and the day-to-day grind. Insight Meditation begins as a relaxation but goes deeper as an appreciation and understanding of life.

All meditations should begin in this way as a sensitive connecting with life. Through an inward reflection you connect with physical feelings and mental states. Acknowledge the comfort and relief enjoyed through the meditative timeout as well as the connection and awareness for what is going on within you.

Presently connected, I feel settled and relieved. I didn't realize I was carrying around this much tension. Meditating, I feel released and lighter as well as my mind clearing.

January 5—Sitting in the Present Moment Continued*

“I am ardent, alert, mindful, and at ease.” SN 47,10

A barometer for all feelings, sensations and moods, the breath yields true insight. When angry, the breathing is tight and restricted. When happy, the breath is easy going and flows naturally. When anxious, the breathing reflects nervousness. When bothered, the breathing is labored and pressured. When calm, the breath flows freely and is relaxed. There is an ongoing communication and interaction between the body and mind. Visualize an hourglass as accumulated pressures are relaxed and released. No two breaths are the same. There are long breaths, short breaths, in between breaths and there are even ‘empty’ breaths of little air. There are heavy breaths as the body requires more oxygen and there are gentle breaths as you relax.

Connect with the breath and the other feelings, sensations and pressures that arise. The chest expands while the lower abdominal cavity lifts. Note how the nasal and sinus cavities in and around the forehead fill and stretch while breathing. The nostrils flare slightly and there is a tingling of air passing at the back of the throat.

Regard your body language. The most obvious pressure points are the buttocks with the weight of sitting, the knee joints, legs as well as along the back. Be aware of the different pressures. A first impulse is to scratch, move or fidget, but stay with the feeling or dull sensation without reacting. The feeling arises and passes on.

Notice, too, how the mind quickly draws in on a sensation or pressure. Concentration bears down and actually exaggerates the moment. Simply try to relax, open and release the sensation. Follow how you react, wanting to change or escape from the discomfort. Feel the pressure points around the eyes, jaw, shoulders and clenched abdominal muscles. Meditation is an appreciation of the body as well as settling mental activity. Be comfortable and at ease. There is no trying to force a response while meditating. Acknowledge the shift from everyday preoccupations to a relaxed awareness. Self-charged energy empties.

Follow the feelings and sensations while sitting (body, feelings, mind and life-actions). If distracted, calmly bring attention back to the breath’s quality and physical sensations. Removed from the hectic runaround be aware of the subtle patterns related to life.

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Sitting to meditate is different. I feel myself relaxing. I'm always on the go, but here I'm able to actually get away from it all. I feel better and at ease.

January 6—An Hourglass Emptying*

“Breathing in long, he discerns, ‘I am breathing in long’; or breathing out long, he discerns, ‘I am breathing out long.’ Or breathing in short, he discerns, ‘I am breathing in short’; or breathing out short, he discerns, ‘I am breathing out short.’ He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in sensitive to the entire body.’ He trains himself, ‘I will breathe out sensitive to the entire body.’ He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in calming bodily fabrication. He trains himself, ‘I will breathe out calming bodily fabrication.’” MN 118

Feelings, emotions, experiences, and distractions have a way of accumulating. An hourglass-like filled up, greed is unsettling, frantic and dissatisfying; hatred is reflected as fear, anxiety, having a short temper and impatience; and confusion consumes as doubt, worry, depression and insecurity. Greed, hatred and confusion, these ‘three poisons’ embitter and torment life.

A present connection and meditative starting point, join with the sitting through a Middle Way appreciation. Charged by self-driven habits, the breath can be short and labored, body tense, and attention strained and compressed. Note how the eyes squint, jaw is clenched, brow furrowed, chest pressured, shoulders hunched, as well as abdominal discomfort and pelvic pain. Relax the facial muscles. Allow the lower jaw to drop and feel how facial muscles stretch as everyday tension dissipates. Acknowledge stress and tension releasing.

Feel the hourglass-like filled tension start to empty. Facial muscles relax as stress disperses, shoulders drop down and the back aligns while the abdomen and pelvic muscles soften as stress drains out. The hourglass-like emptying, follow as self-directed energy flows out through the limbs. Sense how you begin to open up, feel relieved as well as settled. Self is an extreme reaction but through Insight Meditation, a Middle Way balanced intuition is followed.

Follow the course of the breath—nostrils flare, sinus cavities expand, the diaphragm lifts as air is drawn in along with the lower abdomen dropping as air is expelled. Without forcing the mind to bear down and judge, note the breath’s quality. The migraines suffered, the stomach upset, the high blood pressure, the sleepless nights, all reflect a self-centered attachment and domination. Through meditation the hourglass-like habitual buildup empties.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

Nothing mysterious or illusive, awareness for the breath, body, feelings, thoughts and actions puts life into perspective. Self distances you from the present to be at odds with people and the world general. Feel how greed, hatred and confusion have you off kilter. Distracted by discriminating ways, self-identification judges, looks for faults, weaknesses and perceives potential threats. The breath is actually labored by a self-consumed pressure radiating throughout the body (facial muscles, shoulders, abdomen and pelvis) and clouding the mind.

Feelings and thoughts arise but without focusing to react to them, simply follow as they appear and then go on to fade. Allow the hourglass-like of self-charged habits to empty and disperse. Acknowledge the shift as the breath settles and body relaxes. The mind follows to settle down as a clear, open awareness. As self-association gives way, a true recognition for life is known. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation aren't a denial or a repression, but an experience removed from self-dominating habits. Meditation reveals the present moment without self-complication.

Meditation is a mindful recognition and timeout from ongoing distractions and preoccupations. Breathing deeply 5-7 times helps settle the mind. The Middle Way allows for understanding. As a peaceful recognition, feel how accumulated tensions empty and meditation clarifies and defuses stress.

I didn't realize there was so much going on inside me. I sense the buildup and slowly release the stress.

January 7—The Self-actor*

“He assumes form [body] to be the self, or the self as possessing form, or form as in the self, or the self as in form. He assumes feeling to be the self, or the self as possessing feeling, or feeling as in the self, or the self as in feeling. He assumes perception to be the self, or the self as possessing perception, or perception as in the self, or the self as in perception. He assumes [mental states] fabrications to be the self, or the self as possessing fabrications, or fabrications as in the self, or the self as in fabrications. He assumes consciousness [for life-action] to be the self, or the self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in the self, or the self as in consciousness. This is how self-identity view comes about.” MN 109

Start with a body scan. Feel the self-associated pressure throbbing—facial tension, lips clenched, jaw tight, shoulders hunched up, back arched, chest compressed, abdominal tension and pelvic pressure. Reflected is a self-identification. Spend some minutes relaxing and winding down. Note the breath’s quality. The meditative timeout follows the present of body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Feel how a self-compulsion to do, be busy and active dominates.

A collection of body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention (the many give the illusion of the ‘one’), self will be fully detailed in April. But for now follow how you engage and become involved as a self actor. Life, associations, experiences and loves don’t have to be as one-sided or as limiting as made out to be. Settled and centered, ease into the physical relaxation and mental clarity.

When first sitting, a jabbering, active mind may be experienced. The excitement carries over from a long demanding day. Most people aren’t used to taking a break and being quiet. They are actually unnerved by meditation and are anxious. Again this is normal, especially living in these hectic times. Life wasn’t intended to be lived this way. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to settle down. Slowly feel the shift away from self-pressured actions to the sensitive awareness of Insight Meditation and a Middle Way appreciation. Used to impulsively acting out as a self-actor life isn’t truly understood.

Following the breath, proceed with a body scan. Relax the facial muscles, drop the shoulders, allow abdominal muscles to soften and pelvic pressure to ease. Note the

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hourglass-like buildup of self-defined tension. Suffocating, feeling ill and mentally stressed, being a self-actor is exhausting.

Appreciate Insight Meditation's quiet timeout. Allow the hourglass-like buildup of habitual tensions to empty. There are no deadlines, worries or distractions in the present moment. Distinguish the Middle Way from self-domination to being rightfully aware. Without judging or trying to force anything, note the physical and mental pressures. Slowly begin to relax the stress and strain.

Follow the Middle Way as a personal, reflective experience. Realize life without self-intrusion. Acknowledge the open-flowing awareness that is the Middle Way. Insight Meditation is an intuitive experience and appreciation. Slowly disconnect from the many distracting demands to a penetrating awareness and recognition for life. As the hourglass-like of charged habits slowly empties, life is experienced without self-complications. Feel how tense breaths give way to a settled awareness.

As a Middle Way appreciation, follow the basic experiences of body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Without reacting, note the breath's quality and recognize the ongoing communication between the body and mind. Release the hourglass-like accumulation of self-accumulated habits.

Leaving me dizzy and exhausted, I've been caught up in a self runaround. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way direct me to understand life.

January 8—Arising and Fading*

“It is right that we ponder continually continual impermanence.” THAG 1, 111

Tension at work has given you a mild headache, but the stress goes on to pass. Feeling hungry, eating something the feeling subsides. Stuck unnerved in rush hour traffic, cars slowly start moving again. There is an arising and fading to everything in life. Now begin to feel how the hourglass-like of self-accumulated habits intensifies and plays out in these day-to-day dealings.

An arising and fading taking place, connect with the breath as a present centering. Feel how the breath begins, expands, is absorbed, then exhaled and fades. Note how other sensations and physical pressures arise and fade (facial muscles, along the shoulders and back, chest, abdomen and pelvis as well as knees, buttocks and limbs). Acknowledge how feelings as pleasant, painful or neutral experiences come to be. There are also the mental qualities, the ongoing chattering monologue, distractions or clear attention as thoughts arise and fade. Then there is life-action as phenomena in general making for moments, instances and experiences also arise and fade. Following a Middle Way appreciation, one neither indulges nor is aggressive as a self actor.

The challenge is how you react, have expectations, go on to struggle and suffer. The self actor craves, is attached, searches for comfort and ways to come out ahead. The present moment is entirely missed. Life changes and frustration sets in.

Through a meditative awareness appreciate the four areas of body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Follow how sensations and pressures in the body arise and fade. Note how feelings are experienced as pleasant, painful and neutral arise and fade. Appreciate how thoughts and mental impressions flash to arise and fade. Life-actions come to be and pass, arising and fading. Connected through a Middle Way appreciation, the present moment is discerned. Nothing is overlooked or taken for granted, but one is open, present and sensitively aware.

Meditation has centered me. I'm less impulsive. Life is put into proper perspective.

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January 9—Present Moment Awareness*

“He trains himself, 'I will breathe in sensitive to the mind.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out sensitive to the mind.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe in satisfying the mind.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out satisfying the mind.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe in steadying the mind.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out steadying the mind.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe in releasing the mind.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out releasing the mind.’” SN 54, 13

The breath reveals so much—feelings, moods, tensions as well as distractions. Meditation is a beneficial time out as you connect with and examine life. Sitting mindfully, bring attention to one’s breathing and breath quality. First settling to sit, the breath is usually long and heavy from the day’s activity. Feel the tension over the face (tightly pursed lips, jaw clenched, strain around the eyes as well as behind them, forehead lined with tension). Following the inhaling of air, the chest is heavy and abdominal muscles rigid. Relax and breathe naturally. All this is normal after a demanding day and distracting activities. The charged breath reflects a stressed self actor and an hourglass-like of accumulated habitual tensions. Insight Meditation is an all important pause from the habitual runaround to realize and experience life. The present moment is a personal insight. Begin to feel the gentle shift through a Middle Way appreciation not tied to a self actor.

Again, imagine an hourglass-like slowly emptying as self-accumulated habits and corresponding body/mind stress disperse. Allow the facial muscles to relax; the lower jaw to drop, eyelids to soften as well as shoulders and arms to rest at the sides. As an insightful Middle Way experience, begin to realize not only the self-stressed buildup but also its weakening and release. Acknowledge the settling spaciousness that Insight Meditation reveals as well as detachment from self-promoted habits. Follow the arising and fading breath-action. The breath is a clarifying experience. Feel the settling and joy that meditation affords.

As the body relaxes, the mind naturally follows to settle down. Aware of forming mental reactions, don’t fight the thoughts, but rather note how the attention narrows around the thought impression. As a thought or impression stirs, notice how quickly judgment or bias are passed (desire for the pleasant, hatred for the unpleasant and painful, and confusion or doubt as carelessness and neglect for neutral experiences). Unaccustomed to settling down, it can be a challenge to deal with a rambling, uncooperative mind. As a thought impression comes forward and

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concentration narrows, follow the Middle Way appreciation and allow the mind to relax. Through a present recognition, detach to view the thought. Note how stress and anxiety build up. Follow the gradual shift to a Middle Way recognition that doesn't react, struggle or judge. Feel the flexibility and openness as the mind literally softens and relaxes. As an intuitive Middle Way experience, settle into the meditation without reacting or imposing self-limitations.

Breathing deeply 5-7 times through the nose helps settle disturbing thoughts and quiets the mind. Note the shift in awareness as concentration expands. The thought softens and then fades away on its own. Follow the open-flowing conscious attention without a self-critical monologue. Feel what it is like not to be hurried, distracted or have an agenda, but rather a calm, clear, present awareness. The more hectic and demanding life, the more blurred and distracted are feelings and one's attention. The mind is conscious of action experiences while the body feels the action. The two in turn flash, interact and communicate. The present is experienced via a Middle Way appreciation. Follow the arising and fading of the body/mind connection.

Recognize how fast life is moving and how unsettled you may feel. This is the insight that meditation offers—acknowledgement, recognition and understanding. Feeling stressed or bothered, note the tension within and how it is reflected through the breath's quality. Acknowledge how tension is manifested as a physical pressure and even outright pain while the mind narrows as a stressful dialogue.

Insight Meditation is a revealing experience. Recognized is how habits dominate life. The mind settles and the jabbering voice inside the head quiets. Life's drama is put into perspective through a Middle Way appreciation. Allow the hourglass-like of accumulated habits to empty. The breath and breathing is so much more than an automatic reflex, but are an actual recognition of life and reality. Things don't have to be as one-sided, fretted over or a torment as made out to be.

I get carried away. Breath-by-breath, I'm calming down to slowly see through my habits. I'm experiencing how my mind behaves. I'm learning to look at things differently.

January 10—The Body and Mind Connection*

“Change occurs to this man's body, [also feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention] and they become different, but despite this change and alteration in his body, his consciousness is not preoccupied with bodily change...Not being full of desire and attachment, he is not worried. [Similarly with feelings, perception, mental reactions and consciousness]. In this way grasping and worrying do not arise.” SN 22, 7

Seeing children at play, they are passionate and excited about what they do, knowing only for the most part full-speed ahead. It is this very, over-the-top energy that sends them into tantrums, breaking things, and getting into precarious situations. You, too, go over-the-top and are out of control. Now settling through meditation, cultivated is a calm and observing nature rather than impulsively reacting. Daily activities, encounters and responsibilities have one multi-tasking to the point of nervous breakdown and made frantic by life's many demands.

Connecting with the present through a body scan, follow the breath's quality—shorter and heavy breathing at the beginning of sitting, changing to longer and deeper breaths when relaxed (note the refined movements of the diaphragm and abdomen). Breathing in, the air passes through the nostrils, sinuses expand and touches at the back of the throat. Simultaneously the lungs expand and the diaphragm moves as air fills the lungs as well as the lower abdomen lifting up with the respiration. There is a pause as the breath is then released. Revealed is a self-impulsiveness. But through a Middle Way recognition and appreciation these ongoing self-extremes are countered.

As feelings and sensations appear, direct awareness towards them. Feel how the back is aligned, the obvious pressure point from sitting on the buttocks as well as at the knees and legs. Note how the hands are cupped together. Be aware of any facial tension (eyes, forehead and jaw) as well as at the shoulders and along the back. Discern how feelings and sensations affect the breath and body as well as how they communicate. Feel the strain from careless, habitual domination. The body and feelings mirror life-actions. A high-pressured job or personal difficulties reveal themselves as premature aging, weight gain, difficulty sleeping, as well as ulcers, hypertension, and other nervous related illnesses and ailments.

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After a full day of work and non-stop action, the mind takes some time to settle down. Feel how attention searches about for something interesting to focus on. Directing awareness to the breath, the mind follows to settle. Note how the inner monologue quiets down. As a Middle Way observance the mind isn't judgmental or critical. Follow how thoughts settle as an observing open-flowing consciousness.

Settled into the meditation, follow if possible the delicate rhythms of the heart beating. Also note the higher-pitched 'white noise' frequency in the ears as well as the subtle pressure of internal organs. There are also the more obvious sensations of the back, buttocks, pelvis, knees and legs. Simply acknowledge and be aware as the different pressures appear, then fade away. Note as you meditate what it is like for the senses to relax (eyes-sight, ears-sound, nose-smell, tongue-taste, tactile-sensation and mind-attention). Here you are connected as a present recognition.

I never gave much attention to my body or mind. Things just happened. Now I'm seeing how the two are connected. I'm getting to know my self.

January 11—Present Moment Awareness for the Body*

“He trains himself to breathe in calming bodily fabrication, and to breathe out calming bodily fabrication...In this way he remains focused internally on the body in and of itself, or externally on the body in and of itself, or both internally and externally on the body in and of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination and passing away with regard to the body...And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a [person] remains focused on the body in and of itself.” MN 10

As a present first contact, the breath relates to the body. Now go on to experience the full breath/body relationship. Through Insight Meditation self-related stress is revealed. Acknowledge meditation’s settling role as you move away from preoccupations and demands.

A body scan centering brings familiarity and awareness for the body. There is facial tension, shoulder and back stress, chest pressure, abdominal and pelvic strain as well as the more obvious sensations in the buttocks, knees and legs from sitting cross-legged. When first sitting, breathing comes in short, heavy pants revealing the breath as labored and body tense. Observe how you are charged. Recognize the facial pressure of clenched jaw, eye strain, throat tightness, shoulders hunched and back arched, and the general tension over the torso.

It can take a few minutes before actually settling down. Taking 5-7 deep breaths through the nose helps in affirming the present sitting. Follow how the breath softens along with the body, muscles and nervous system relaxing. Follow the Middle Way appreciation rather than judging the physical pressures. Relate to the breath as well as the broader physical presence.

Settling into the meditation, begin to feel the shift and relaxation away from everyday stress to a Middle Way awareness. Note how the hourglass-like of self-accumulated habits slowly disperses. Insight Meditation is both relaxing and intuitive. The mind settling down, feel the release of greed, hatred and confusion. Self pressures slowly dissolve.

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Follow how the breath's energy flows through the body then goes on to fade. You do breathe differently as a self-impulsive actor or through a mindful Middle Way appreciation. Simply feel how the self-actor struggles with the moment and the ongoing stress taking place between the body and mind. Through a present awareness realize how everyday experiences affect the body.

Previously, careless and neglectful, but Insight Meditation discerns how present circumstances arise, fade, and change. As a Middle Way appreciation, understanding and insight stand out. Life doesn't just happen but has your input.

Often I'm keyed up and tense, but meditation is a valuable awareness experience and release. I see how I'm self-involved. I go on to release all the stress and tension.

January 12—Present Moment Awareness for Feelings*

“He discerns that he is feeling a painful feeling of the flesh he discerns that he is feeling a painful...pleasant...or neutral feeling of the flesh. In this way he remains focused internally on feelings in and of themselves, or externally on feelings in and of themselves, or both internally and externally on feelings in and of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to feelings, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to feelings...And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a [person] remains focused on feelings in and of themselves.” MN 10

Accompanying the body are feelings—pleasant, painful and neutral. All moments and experiences have a corresponding feeling contacted through the senses. Sought are pleasant feelings, turned away from and naturally avoided are painful experiences, and there is a general ambivalence towards neutral feelings. Insight Meditation reveals a self-related agitation and reaction. Now follow meditation’s settling role as you move away from the daily demands.

Establishing a present connection with the breath, note the pressures, sensations and energies. At the start of a meditation, strong feelings pulse. A body scan centering helps to settle down. Recognize how a sensation or a feeling is distracting. Note whether the moment is pleasant, painful or neutral. Follow how a pleasant feeling is clenched, recoiling at pain, and boredom for neutral moments. The self-actor struggles with the affecting conditions, pressures, influences, and actions. Settling into the meditation, acknowledge the arising of feelings. Through a present awareness, feelings are generated by sensory stimulation and experienced as sense impressions (eyes, sight and forms; tongue, tastes and flavors; ears, sounds and noise; nose, smell and scents; skin, touch and tactile; and mind, thoughts and thinking). Recognize how quick to react and get caught up one is in wave after wave of sensory stimulation and reacting to them. Acknowledge the stressful communication between the body and mind as pleasant, painful and neutral moments arise and fade.

As a Middle Way appreciation, watch and observe how feelings arise, play out without judgment or impulsiveness. The Middle Way isn’t pressured or reactive, but is a personal awareness. The self actor grasps, craves and is attached through greed; avoids, dislikes, and gets angry through hate; and is worried and doubtful

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through confusion. Acknowledge how desire emerges around pleasant situations. Yearning one becomes attached and seeks to prolong the experience or pursue after more or something different. Disliking an encounter, one is frustrated and when angry seeks to escape or push the encounter away. Neutral moments are boring as ambivalence arises and the experience is tuned out. Acting out of self interest and falling into fulfilling a self-ideal, follow the shift and release from these habitual tendencies.

Previously, careless and neglectful, but through Insight Meditation discern how circumstances arise, fade, and change. A Middle Way appreciation, understanding and insight stand out. Life doesn't just happen but has your input.

I feel less impulsive. I see how I react to feelings and how my habits get the better of me. My breathing constricts, I feel stressed, and my attention narrows. Not everything has to be about self.

January 13—Present Moment Awareness for the Mind*

“He remains focused internally on mental qualities in and of themselves, or externally on mental qualities in and of themselves, or both internally and externally on mental qualities in and of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to mental qualities, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to mental qualities, or on the phenomenon of origination and passing away with regard to mental qualities...And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a [person] remains focused on mental qualities in and of themselves...” MN 10

Usually when first sitting, the mind reels as a non-stop yammering voice whines. Insight Meditation reveals a self-consumed domination. Impulsive, careless and habit driven, one is dissatisfied, upset and stressed out. Now follow meditation’s settling role as you step away from all the demands on your life.

Establishing a present awareness, acknowledge the tension stirred up and how mental states are affected. Busy, preoccupied and engaged, you try to settle down but the mind resists. This is normal. Now relax through a centering body scan and settle into the present moment.

Taking 5-7 deep breaths through the nose helps quiet the mind. Like a puppy running everywhere, simply bring the attention back to the breath’s quality. Feel how mental reactions affect as stress behind the eyes and over across the forehead. What is taken to be a thought is really the mind narrowing and judging an experience. Follow how the attention focuses and mental pressure is felt. It can take extra time to calm down if unusually anxious, worried or upset.

Simply feel the self actor, struggling with the moment. Acknowledge the interaction and communication between the body and mind. A desiring thought has the mind unsettled and body nervous, stomach agitated, heart rate up and breath short; a hateful thought and the mind is tight and painful, the body reflecting headaches, nervous stomach and a suffocating-like breath; a confused thought is listless, worried or depressed.

Through a Middle Way appreciation follow the arising of the thought, how the attention narrows and bears down, but also relaxing to release the thought

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impression. Insight Meditation defuses the self-cacophony bringing ease, relief and control to life. The hourglass-like buildup of greed, hatred and confusion are defused. Knowing thoughts as a self-reaction, awareness releases the self-formed stress.

Follow how the breath's energy flows through the body. As moments arise, a self-reaction emerges for the experience, the breath constricts and the body tenses and the mind is strained. Establishing awareness, slowly relax the self-reaction.

Previously, careless and neglectful, but through Insight Meditation discern how circumstances arise, fade, and change. A Middle Way appreciation, understanding and insight stand out. Life doesn't just happen but has your input.

I see how my mind works. I react as a self-actor. Always on the go, thoughts spin through my head. Meditating, I'm connected to the present not as self, but for life as it is.

January 14—Present Moment Awareness for Life-Actions*

“He lives contemplating consciousness [life-action experiences] in consciousness internally, or he lives contemplating consciousness [life-action experiences] in consciousness externally, or he lives contemplating consciousness [life-action experiences] in consciousness internally and externally. He lives contemplating origination-things in consciousness, or he lives contemplating dissolution-things in consciousness [life-action experiences], or he lives contemplating origination-and-dissolution-things in consciousness. Or his mindfulness is established with the thought: ‘Consciousness [as life-action experiences] exists...’” MN 10

Insight Meditation is a needed break and timeout from the normal hectic blur. Feel the breath’s quality as anxious and exhausting. Impatience, a short temper, and even tears are shed. Life becomes too much to handle. Over eating, drug and alcohol abuse, sleeplessness, ulcers, heart problems, all reflect a self-obsessed run around. After a body scan centering, sense the shift away from everyday preoccupation to a Middle Way appreciation; aware and observing rather than engaged and reacting. Now follow meditation’s settling role as you step away from life’s many demands.

Actions are challenging and disturbing both physically and mentally. Without meditation one is impulsive and out of control. Follow how the breath’s energy flows through the body as well as affecting the mind (breath short, body tense and mind clouded). Slowly relaxing, sense the habitual energy relaxing and releasing. Settled through a Middle Way appreciation, detach from indulgences and aggression. Acknowledge how as a self-actor you react to the moment. Realize how life-actions experiences affect the body and mind.

Struggling to keep up with the constant barrage and changes, life is contacted and experienced as action. Disappointment, frustration, anger, depression and confusion are reactions. As an intuitive experience, detach from greed, hatred and confusion to a settled awareness. A Middle Way appreciation as personal realization is experienced. The body relaxing as well as mentally calm, the moment is released.

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Previously, careless and neglectful, but through Insight Meditation discern how circumstances arise, fade, and change. A Middle Way appreciation, understanding and insight stand out. Life doesn't just happen but has your input.

Always on the go, I make myself exhausted and irritable. I'm learning that I don't have to be all wound up. What a relief meditation is—what an insight!

January 15—The Joy of Meditation *

“Let’s periodically enter and remain in seclusion and rapture. That’s how you should train yourself.” AN 5, 176

Meditation is joyful. Not the joy of gains, rewards or of plenty, but a settled joy as release, intuition and understanding releasing greed, hatred and confusion. Even in the best of situations like winning the lottery, after a wedding or the birth of a child there is an accompanying stress as anxiety, worry and dissatisfaction. What to do with all the money won, how to spend it, or even hoard it. After the wedding there can be jealousy, control issues or infidelity. A child though beautiful can be an added financial burden, a challenge to bring up, along with the worries of unforeseen illnesses or accidents. Meditation isn’t an escape or denial, but a direct investigation and insight to how one is compromised by a self-obsession. Stepping away from the indulgence and aggression of the self-actor, through meditation a Middle Way appreciation is applied and life is realized as joyful.

Centered, at ease and aware, connect with the present breath quality. Are you happy, at ease or stressed and challenged? Comforted and revealing, no psychologist or therapist can ever know you as well as or be as effective as Insight Meditation. Meditating, direct contact is established and the present moment experienced. For example, after a difficult day at work, note the breath and mental state. Feel the facial tension. Allow the jaw to drop and open. Sense if you are squinting and the strain behind the eyes as well as the tension at the forehead. Swallow to moisten the lips and mouth, relaxing the throat muscles. Note if there is any chest, abdominal or pelvic discomfort. Slowly release the hourglass-like of accumulated habitual energies.

Settling the body, the attention also goes on to quiet and calm down. It is only natural that it takes some extra time to compose the mind. Acknowledge the communication between the body and mind. All situations and experiences have both a physical as well as a mental connection. Generated as a self-association, with every thought there is an accompanying degree of physical stress (eyes and forehead strain, chest pressure, abdominal and pelvic tension).

Through meditation connect with an intuitive awareness to the four distinguishing areas of body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Noting both the breath’s quality and mental manifestations, meditation and a Middle Way appreciation allow one to relax,

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release, understand, and experience fulfillment. The self-burden is slowly dropped. Acknowledge the relief, release and joy meditation affords. You go from an impulsive and over-the-top self-consumed domination to a settled distinguishing and relief from a self-obsessed runaround. A general well being, fulfillment, confidence and peace of mind are experienced.

As habits disperse, a quiet joy, ease, and insight are known. Realized is the ongoing self-domination affecting life. There is joy in recognizing and better directing your actions. You bring calm to life and have patience for impulsive ways. The Middle Way leads away from self-domination.

Meditation makes a difference. Not only am I less anxious, angered and doubtful, I'm relaxed and feel good about life. I'm more aware and my edginess is gone.

January 16—Dealing with a Restless Mind, Applying Direct Attention*

“Abandoning covetousness with regard to the world, he dwells with an awareness devoid of covetousness. He cleanses his mind of covetousness. Abandoning ill will and anger, he dwells with an awareness devoid of ill will, sympathetic with the welfare of all living beings. He cleanses his mind of ill will and anger. Abandoning sloth and drowsiness, he dwells with an awareness devoid of sloth and drowsiness, mindful, alert, percipient of light. He cleanses his mind of sloth and drowsiness. Abandoning restlessness and anxiety, he dwells undisturbed, his mind inwardly stilled. He cleanses his mind of restlessness and anxiety. Abandoning uncertainty, he dwells having crossed over uncertainty, with no perplexity with regard to skillful mental qualities. He cleanses his mind of uncertainty.” MN 39

On occasion it may be difficult to focus and settle down. Squealing as though on fast forward, the mind plans, searches and is consumed by distracting thoughts (work related issues, lustful fantasies, the recollection of some mishap, or browsing on the internet). Fidgeting on the cushion, the attention jumps from one thought to the next. Every little itch is grating. You would rather be anywhere else than on the meditation ‘hot seat,’ bored and frustrated. Sneaking a peek at the clock, only five minutes have passed. The mind isn’t used to quieting down or being at rest. Self-related habits charge and dominate.

For example, a train doesn’t all at once come to a halt, nor do thoughts instantaneously stop. Self-consumed greed, hatred and confusion rule. Everyday life and worldly pursuits are stressful distractions. You just don’t erase or ignore what has happened. But what meditation allows are a settling down, relief, and understanding from self-obsessed impulsive habits. ‘Direct attention’ is applied when distracted and ‘clear recognition’ as an awareness recognition for when the mind is composed (also referred to as ‘undirected’ appreciation for a mind that is settled or not needing to be ‘directed’). You are either present or lost in a self-fantasy.

Unable to settle down (again it takes a while for the mind to quiet after a day’s activity), take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality. Connecting with the present, acknowledge the shift from everyday urgency to an open-flowing awareness. Follow the body for related symptoms and pressures. Dropping the lower jaw helps stretch facial muscles. Allow the shoulders and back

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to relax. Note how the mind clenches around a thought and how the body tightens up. Through a Middle Way appreciation self-related stress begins to free up. Feel the hourglass-like tensions emptying, Insight Meditation is a clear directed life awareness. Like a muscle contracting, try to relax the impulse to judge or criticize. Following the breath's quality, the mind begins to settle and the incessant chatter quiets.

Simply follow the distracting mental energy. Acknowledge how stress and tensions dominate (work, family pressures and daily demands weigh heavily). Notice how thoughts flash to triggering a continuous ongoing mental disturbance. Bearing down on the thought, a subtle stress stands out (forehead pressure as well as behind the eyes along with abdominal tension). A thought is actually a pinpointed, narrowed concentration, reacting to a situation or experience. Acknowledge the Middle Way balanced approach without judgment, criticism or reacting. As thought impressions flash, note whether the instance are desiring, hateful or confusing along with the associated feelings of pleasant, painful or neutral. The Middle Way appreciation and clarity is a 'direct attention.' Connected with the present, gently relax the thought. Applying 'direct attention,' note the changes in the breath from heavy and tension-filled to easy, soothing and relaxed. Awareness of the body and mind, one moves away from a one-sided self-obsession.

A longer body scan helps settle the restless mind. Smile as habits discharge. Note the changes in the breath's quality from tension filled to being relaxed and calm. Having awareness for the body and mind, dominating and stifling habits are released. The world turns, events spin, but one isn't compelled to respond. As a Middle Way appreciation for life, a transforming awareness is experienced—calm as well as relief from self-promoted actions. Below the level of distracting impulses, there is awareness and insight. Feel the breath as refreshed and relaxed. Aware of the subtle experiences revealed through the breath, Insight Meditation is a personal understanding of life. Patience and relief from self-centered behavior stands out.

Feel the freeing and release from one-sided reactions to indulge or be aggressive. A Middle Way realization reveals life without self-associated intrusion. Acknowledge the tranquility not only during meditation, but also carrying over into daily activities. Whatever the situation, apply the useful technique of 'direct attention.' Here you are learning to be your own guide and benefactor. After all, who knows you best?

Amazing how everything seems to have stopped. I can't believe that I'm actually this settled. Nothing seems to be happening. There is only now and the breath. My body is relaxed and my mind clear.

January 17—Clear Awareness*

“A [person] abides contemplating body as body, feelings as feeling, mind as mind and life-action as life-action—ardent, fully aware, mindful—leading away the unhappiness that comes from wanting the things of the world...When the mind is directed...happiness is born. From this happiness, joy is then born. With a joyful mind, the body relaxes. A relaxed body feels content, and the mind of one content becomes concentrated. He then reflects: ‘The purpose for which I directed my mind has been accomplished.’” SN 47,10

In the introduction it was mentioned that without realizing it, one has been meditating your whole life long. You instinctively know when to rest, catch your breath and sit back. Meditation is all about awareness and being connected to what is happening both physically and mentally. Nothing is taken for granted. Exposed is a self actor role playing dominated by greed, hatred and confusion. Recognizing these tormenting extremes, there is also the Middle Way approach as settling, clear-minded and understanding. Having a dual purpose and function, insight as well as fulfillment is known. Life is understood.

A present-minded ‘clear awareness’ is applied. Realize the self actor tug-of-war taking place. Through a Middle Way appreciation, patient and centered, connect with an uninvolved or ‘clear awareness.’

The breath as initial contact, recognition for when you aren’t disturbed but clear minded. Feel the ease and natural flow of the breath along with the open and undistracted attention. Acknowledge the absence of self-preoccupation normally leading to greed, hatred and confusion. From the start you have had instances of clear awareness. Insight Meditation further strengthens and builds on this recognition and well being. The breath and body are relaxed, feelings settled, mind quiet and life-actions are undisturbed. As a mindful consciousness, join with the relief, happiness and clarity of the present without self-domination.

A Middle Way appreciation, when not engaged as a self actor, conflict and stress are absent. Self-bias doesn’t cloud the mind. Experiences slow down as a deepening appreciation for life. Quiet, relieved and undistracted, acknowledge awareness and insight. A self-obsession doesn’t dominate. ‘Clear awareness’ is part of life, too.

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What a relief to be connected with my life. I see a pattern—self-impulsive or having a settled awareness.

January 18—Having Patience*

“Patient endurance: the foremost austerity.” DH 184

Today has been one of those days. Stuck in traffic, responding to one phone call and email after another at work, unable to get away for a break or lunch, there hasn't been a moment to rest. Stress is high and the pressures buildup.

Arriving at home after a long day, take a moment to connect with the quiet setting. Acknowledge the drop off in activity. This is the present moment. Note the temperature inside the house, see the shadows across the room. Take off a jacket and slip off the shoes. Stretch and smile to be finally resting. Don't be in a hurry to check the phone messages, turn on the TV, or get on the computer. Feeling tired, go ahead and have a snack of an apple or some yogurt. Freshen up in the bathroom.

Begin with a body scan. Relax the facial muscles, drop the shoulders, and settle into a comfortable sitting position. Allow the body to unwind and the mind to quiet after the long, hectic day. You may feel tired at the start of the meditation, but slowly the fatigue lifts. It can take an extra few minutes to relax, the breath to settle, mind to quiet and get a 'second wind.' View the moment through a Middle Way appreciation rather than reacting to the fatigue. Slowly disconnect from the self-stressed breath and ease away from greed, hatred and confusion. As you sit, the first breaths usually come as deep heavy sighs. The head may drop forward because of fatigue. This is all right. Sit with the weariness without resisting. Follow the rising and falling of the chest and the bellows-like affect of the breath. Slowly allow self-accumulated tension to empty. Feel the shift from habit-driven energies to a restful patience. Meditation isn't a struggle but a quiet, joyful time out.

Acknowledging the winding down from a long day. A Middle Way composure is followed. Settled after an initial body scan, awareness connects with patience, gentleness and well being. Note the present recognition as a clear-open attention. Feel the release of accumulated pressures. Sense where self-charged habits are stifling. The breath's quality reveals how habits take a toll. Note the shift away from self-reference to Middle Way appreciation. Follow the slow release from self-charged stress. A sighed relief, experience the patience removed from self-promotion.

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The breath, body and mind activity settling, feel how patience emerges. A twitching may be felt through the body and muscles, but the impulsiveness and urgency fall away. Note how the chattering mind has quieted down. Patience stands out.

If distracted, calmly guide the attention back to the breath without bearing down to judge. The breath as a reference point helps quiet the thoughts. Feel how concentration squeezes around a thought, injecting a self-related stress. The stress then translates as physical tension. Breathe deeply and relax. Slowly dominating habits are released and disperse.

Acknowledge the relief, the settling, the ease and quiet joy that meditation brings. Without self-reference, an actual healing takes place. Premature aging, illnesses, nervousness and depression are all symptoms of an out of control, self-driven life. Insight Meditation directs one as an understanding and fulfillment. The Middle Way experience brings balance and perspective to life.

Not every meditation is a 'magical moment.' Connect with the sitting as it is. Know patience rather than resisting or trying to force the moment to be something other than what it is. Follow a Middle Way appreciation for life rather than a self-affront.

Some days are harder than others. Meditation helps me relax and feel refreshed. I actually sense how I let go after a long, hard day. My mind clears and I feel better. What a relief to know and have patience.

January 19—Knowing Goodwill and Gratitude*

“Thus above, below, and all around, everywhere, in its entirety, one keeps pervading the all-encompassing cosmos with an awareness imbued with good will—abundant, expansive, immeasurable, without hostility, without ill will.”
SN 42, 8

Things are going well. You are enthusiastic about meditating and the insightful practice. But problems crop up. There are family challenges or difficulties with a boss or co-worker. Voices are raised and sides taken. How are troubles, setbacks, challenges or nastiness to be handled? Do you fight, name call, seek revenge, hate, cry, run away, or ignore the situation or person? These would be one-sided, self-expressed reactions. This is what has always been done. Now, through a Middle Way awareness, constructive options and choices are cultivated. The Middle Way is a threefold experience of conduct-virtue (controlling transgressing habits), meditation-concentration (controlling active mental habits), and insight-wisdom (penetrating to eradicate dormant habits).

Relating to the area of conduct-virtue, goodwill (or non-harming) is a positive way to deal with challenging situations and difficult people. The Middle Way is a realistic intuition of life. Awareness connecting with patience, the next natural step to follow is goodwill. The inclusion of goodwill is a defining experience for everyone.

Established first as a present awareness, impulsiveness slows down. Follow the Middle Way appreciation for how off balance and troubling habits are. Finally, a budding insight leads to patience and virtuous actions to include and be extended to others. Through meditation an awareness and sensitivity direct one's thoughts and actions.

At first being skeptical and possibly even feeling threatened and having animosity towards something that is new and different in life may arise. If someone only knows despair and cruelty or comes from a history of anger and abuse, how else can they be expected to react toward the offering of goodwill. There is a period of adjustment to the new surroundings.

Connecting with goodwill, gratitude is realized. Begin by being grateful for your good fortune and many blessings; grateful for the support of family and friends (despite the conflicts that do crop up from time-to-time); grateful for having food while there

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are so many needy people struggling to get by; having gratitude for the clothing that protects and warms the body; grateful for a home and shelter when others are doing without, and for having medicine when needed. On this basic level you are truly fortunate and blessed.

Insight Meditation is much more than a relaxation and tuning out, but is an awareness to disconnect from impulsive habits and self-dominated ways. Gratitude, goodwill and compassion play a key role in beginning to soften a stern, inflexible character. Rough edges are smoothed out to be accepting, patient and helpful. You see beyond limiting prejudice and bitterness. Goodwill opens the mind and goes on to tame an impatient, short-tempered person. Gratitude is humbling as well as ennobling. Known is life as something other than a self-engaged and estranged.

Take a moment to reflect on life and where you would be without other people, their kindness and generosity making it easier. Meals come from farmers and field workers (not to mention nature). The newspaper is put together by reporters and people working long hours at the printing press. Smelly garbage is picked up by refuse workers. There is the clerk at the grocery store helping, the mechanic working on the car, the school nurse tending feverish children, the doctor, the postal worker as well as the librarian. Begin by honestly realizing the efforts and support of others.

Acknowledge the role people play in your life. My dear spouse (or close family member or friend), you are important to me. You help and uplift my life. I may not always be demonstrative in my feelings, but without your support and understanding my life would be impossible and miserable. Thank you for sharing your love. I deeply care for you and hold you in esteem. You bring joy and happiness to my life. My children, too. They are healthy and intelligent. I couldn't ask for more. May no tragedy, sudden illness or accident come to you. May you all be blessed.

Meditation is a revealing experience. Nothing nor is anyone ignored or taken for granted. Realize how a self-dominated, one-sided attitude is limiting. But through a Middle Way appreciation one reaches out to include others and share with them. Consciously think about and hold others in esteem. Feel how the body naturally relaxes, the mind opens and self-related stress falls away. Note the settling and joy felt in the moment.

Now concluding the meditation, consciously carry over the gratitude and goodwill to daily life. Be thankful for all that you have, receive each day, and the difference others make in your life. Genuinely offer and extend goodwill to everyone. Be sincere and let people know you appreciate their company, efforts, and sharing. Thanking others during the course of the day shows that you are aware, sensitive and caring.

To all my close friends, I'm grateful for your thoughtfulness and friendship. I couldn't ask or want for a better reward than the trust, dedication and the generosity you show me. We have been through a lot and are connected.

I'm fortunate to be in good health. I'm also fortunate to be employed and to be able to live the quality of life I do. I've only to look at the plight of the homeless, struggling families, and the less fortunate to know this. I'm truly grateful for my many blessings.

January 20—Inner Child Meditation*

“Let him not deceive another nor despise anyone anywhere. In anger or ill will let him not wish another ill. Just as a mother would protect her only child with her life even so let one cultivate a boundless love towards all beings.” SNP 1, 8

Within everyone is an inner child that consists of all of past memories and experiences, all the joy as well as the many tears shed, fears and, unfortunately, sometimes deep trauma. Most people have had a happy childhood. The memories of birthday parties, special visits with grandparents, and weekend excursions made for a healthy growing-up. But there are others who haven't been so fortunate. There may have been neglectful parents, loud fighting and divorce, a nightmare of sexual abuse, or just not enough love (parents are a product of their own unfortunate childhoods). These early torments carry over to later life as scarred emotional baggage.

Smile now in awareness of your inner child—a gentle, caring smile. Not trying to overshadow or minimize any cruelty or suffering, but a smile that acknowledges and realizes in a positive and caring way the person, feelings and troubles inside you. Aware and caring, there are unresolved issues, but many troubled people are unable to admit or deal constructively with their past. They lash out, projecting the cruelty and pain of their inner child. Yet there is a Middle Way removed from self-domination and divisiveness which is without blame, ridicule or loathing. Insight Meditation is a personal experience beyond self-handicap. Continue smiling gently, appreciating the inner child, knowing the emotional scars of the past. I have come to visit with you. We are friends. I realize that you are hurt. Now together we can deal with these issues to have closure.

I'm truly sorry for your suffering. Yes, you were neglected. Yes, you were abused. The suffering was horrible for all those many years. How could it have happened—to me...to me! I see all the cruelty. I feel the pain. I now embrace you. You aren't alone. There has been a lot of heartache, but we can try to move on. Not everything is suffering. Look around. Don't be scared. Not everyone is trying to hurt you. I'm here with you, my inner child. I've come as a friend. You aren't alone. I smile with you here, my friend, my inner child.

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Smile now in forgiveness. I see how my past has brought me pain and suffering. I forgive you, my past, my inner child. I understand. It wasn't your fault. You are innocent. I see the anger I've been holding onto, from difficult parents as well as others. They made me the bitter person I am, but I can't continue living this way. I only hurt myself. I forgive you, mother and father, for the suffering. You did nothing wrong, my inner child. You are a survivor.

Smile now even if you should be weeping or upset. It is all right. You understand the pain and trauma in order to have healing, closure and peace. Now go on to live a happy life. Be patient and forgiving as memories and flashbacks flare up from time-to-time. Connect with forgiveness to know love and have esteem. Smile and live in peace. Insight Meditation helps to penetrate the truth and brings understanding to life. Feel the release and closure of past neglect and suffering chapters.

It isn't easy looking back but, yes, I do have unresolved issues. I can't keep things bottled up. I only harm myself. I may not be able to forget but I can forgive. I can forgive myself and start to live in peace then I can forgive others. I've been making myself miserable. Now I can begin to heal and live happily.

January 21—A Life of Goodwill and Caring*

***“Don’t underestimate merit
(‘It won’t amount to much’).
A water jar fills,
even with water
falling in drops.
With merit — even if
bit by bit, habitually —
the enlightened one fills himself full.” DH 122.***

Here, then, is the challenge to a deeper understanding and true fulfillment. Do you sit and reserve practice only for the meditation cushion? Is awareness and understanding only an intellectual exercise? Of course, problems and difficulties will come your way and are a part of life, but Insight Meditation as a meaningful life practice gives way to transcending these harsh moments. Meditation is a connection to care, have gratitude, goodwill and patience. The present moment is the spring-board to personal understanding and peace; release from being a hotheaded, impatient or fearful person to being a compassionate one.

Almost daily, someone may speak rudely to you. Small mindedness is directed from a co-worker. A family member’s or friend’s words are wounding. Previously, not having awareness or understanding, one lashed out. A turning point in life comes when you are honestly aware as a present-minded person to embrace goodwill and caring. Moving away from the impulse to judge or be indignant, patience and goodwill are shared. Aware and patient, the Middle Way is revealing. More than suffering habits, control is taken to direct one’s life.

Unjustified, goodwill and caring are at times seen as something trivial or as a weakness. But on the contrary, compassion is a sensitive appreciation to deal with long-ignored personal issues and counter productive habits. A dialogue of forgiveness, acceptance and understanding develops rather than hatred, fear or neglect. The rewards of caring and awareness have a more beneficial effect than years of pain-staking sacrifice. There is already too much suffering in the world. Compassion is needed. The Middle Way is a unifying, wholesome appreciation and approach.

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Acknowledge charged feelings as well as a distracted attention. Relax following the breath's quality. There is nothing demanding or needing attention other than this present moment recognition. The self extremes tug-of-war for indulgence and aggression are detoured. Through a body scan centering (facial muscles stretched, jaw unhinged, shoulders down, abdomen relaxed), the mind follows to settle down and detach from self-centered actions.

Be conscious of the self-conflict: breathing strained and labored, tension at the forehead and behind the eyes, jaw clenched, throat thick and tight, shoulders and back muscles hunched up, chest pressured as well as abdominal and pelvic tension. Take a few deep breaths through the nose to defuse the moment, allowing the self-accumulated stress to flow out and disperse. Acknowledge Insight Meditation's settling benefits. Aware of the turmoil, feel the shift away from self-attachment to a Middle Way relief and stability.

Follow as you move from the self-stressed breath to insight awareness as a direct understanding. Feelings and emotions don't have to end in emotional outbursts or disappointment. Meditation is a present recognition and release from being a self-obsessed character.

Pressured feelings generate neglect, anger and a backlash. A Middle Way appreciation as meaningful awareness and understanding are cultivated. The stress and near strangulation of the self-breath is felt and known as charged mood swings. Now acknowledge patience and goodwill as insights deepens. You may feel anger when challenged but also realize how to guide yourself through the upset. The Middle Way is calming and leads to patience then establishing goodwill. Feel the gradual shift from self conflict to the awareness, benefit and transformation experienced through Insight Meditation. Life is revealed in the course of a breath—self-dominated or insightfully directed.

It can be argued that when all has been said and done that the other person is unchanged and remains difficult. Of what use is goodwill? In the end, you are realized, changed and have moved on. How can you go back to being a bitter, angry and vindictive person? Compassion has been engaged. Not everything has to be about anger and upset. A peaceful intention is known. If the other person chooses to hold a grudge, they are tormented by the shortcoming.

Goodwill brings out a humanity and virtue to the forefront; a nurturing and open communication with others develops. The other person is greeted as a friend rather than as a threat or the enemy. The benefits of goodwill are restful sleep, waking easier, being endeared and closer to others, having a clear mind, and being a happy and fulfilled person.

For so long I've over reacted and paid the price. The lessons have been hard I earned. Meditation allows me to settle down and reflect on my life. I catch my breath to realize all the stress and problems I'm going through. I understand how I've been misled as a self-actor.

January 22—Acceptance and Forgiveness*

“In any event, you should train yourselves: ‘Our minds will be unaffected and we will say no evil words. We will remain sympathetic to that person’s welfare, with a mind of good will, and with no inner hate. We will keep pervading him with an awareness imbued with good will and, beginning with him, we will keep pervading the all-encompassing world with an awareness imbued with good will—abundant, expansive, immeasurable, free from hostility, free from ill will.’ That’s how you should train yourselves.” MN 21

Dominated by greed, hatred and confusion, there is no let-up to the conflict brought about as a self actor. Along with goodwill and gratitude, meditation as a practical awareness and settling turn the tide from overwhelming habits to a Middle Way appreciation. Self-accumulated attachments free up. Life is more than being lost in a self-consumed runaround. Awareness is a rewarding personal experience, moving from carelessness and impulsiveness to being mindful and having understanding for life. As the shock waves from self-reactions settle down, Insight Meditation and connecting with the breath and mental states lead to revealing insights.

Though starting with one’s self, your day-to-day communication with others and the world are equally important. Awareness joins with other people to offer and extend kindness—family, friends, neighbors, at work, school, church, and in other social moments. It is good to see you. I hope the day is going well for you. Take care. Holding other people in regard, feel the positive considerations of friendship. The hard-edged, self-focus falls away. Note how breathing as well as mental activity settles down. Insight Meditation is a Middle Way appreciation removed from the tug-of-war of self-extremes. Continue offering goodwill, well wishes and sympathy. Every moment is a revealing experience.

As a continued sharing and offering, now extend sympathy and concern to those people who are difficult to deal with, rub you the wrong way and with whom you are impatient. What good are cold stares, not speaking, turning a back on someone and feeling angry? Negative feelings are like so many piercing spears. There are other options in life—the Middle Way and sharing goodwill. Accepting, healing and closure are brought to negative episodes.

Visualize the other person. Stressed and resentful, note how the body is affected and becomes rigid, blood pressure increasing and emotions are overwhelming. Feel how

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the mind narrows to judge and frustration creeps in. Now slowly connect with the breath's quality. Acknowledge resistance and relax the 'hot spots' within the body and mind. Patient, having goodwill and acceptance, feel the wholesome qualities radiating as compassion for one's self as well as others.

I know that things haven't always been good between us. We've had some friction in the past but right now I hope things are going well and that you are all right. I hope things work out. Please forgive me, accept my apologies and have patience with me. I know my own shortcomings. I understand you better after coming to know myself. I'm not the easiest person to get along with and ask for your support and understanding. Let's meet half way.

Referring to the two of you in the third person plural as 'we,' consideration for the other person is made more real. Using 'we,' no longer is the other person distant or anonymous, but you join with them in settling things. As a shared moment of concern, friendship and goodwill are offered rather than aggression and retaliating.

Feel as self-absorbed ways unlock. Irregardless of the other person, as a Middle Way connection you are changed and that is what matters. In the end each person is responsible for their actions. You have positively taken control of your life. The Middle Way is open, embracing and understanding. Releasing self habits, wholesome options and choices are expressed.

Anger and holding grudges just keeps me down. I feel badly and exhausted. My mind gets all wound up and confused. I realize how I've been fighting with myself. Forgiving, having patience, trying to live happily and share, I feel how my life is turning around.

January 23—Closure*

***“Even the good
meet with bad fortune
as long as their good
has yet to mature.
But when it's matured
That's when they meet
with good fortune.” DH 120***

Below the everyday-quick-to-respond self actor level, there is caring, patience, gratitude and goodwill. As with all meditations, sit and appreciate the present moment: where you are, physical sensations, feelings and thoughts. Do a brief body scan. Relax any physical pressures and release mental tensions. Breathe deeply 5-7 times through the nose to connect with the present breath quality. Follow the body, feelings, mind and life-actions.

Before ever sharing kindness, goodwill and generosity with others, you must be reconciled and at peace. Otherwise only offer a less than complete and honest compassion is offered. There is a need for healing and rightful closure to the suffering chapters. Begin by acknowledging and understanding your own sorrows and pains. Feel how self-nature is a hindrance and suffering. Reflected as physical pain and stress as well as mental anguish, be aware of the negative dialogue of hatred, bitterness and anger absorbing you.

As a Middle Way appreciation don't engage reactively with the sorrow nor dismiss and brush it under the rug as a repression. Identify the moment and note its presence. Don't dismiss the past but rather understand it and have proper closure for the emotions and sorrows. Slowly, goodwill allows for healing to take place and move on in life. Anger and bitterness are like putting salt on a wound, keeping it raw, painful and festering. Awareness is a sensitive recognition. Meditating, begin to acknowledge the sorrow rather than fight with the past to separate from the painful self-identification. Open to connect with and forgive the past. Moving away from self, a Middle Way recognition is followed.

I have been hurt, wounded, and betrayed. Yes, it happens to everyone. I feel my sorrows and pain, the let downs and rejections. There has been misunderstanding

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and anger over the years. But all along, what I really have been doing is hating myself and my own worst enemy. I see how I have been holding on to my upset and torment.

May I forgive and let go of my anger and bitterness. It has to end sometime, somehow. Otherwise I only bring more suffering to myself. I have to forgive in order to live in peace. May there finally be acceptance and closer. I understand my sorrow and how it has affected me. I can't change the past but I can stop hating and forgive.

Parents may have been neglectful, shown little affection or worse. A past relationship or mate may have been dishonest. I understand and know my pain. May I stop the torment and be a friend to myself. Happiness and well-being are a part of life, too. It wasn't right, but I must move on. I have to forgive. There has to be an end. What good is it to pick at old wounds, whipping and belittling myself? Try to feel patience, acceptance and understanding to whatever degree you are capable of. Caring and compassion need to be nurtured.

You may be hesitant, but through meditation and a Middle Way consideration hatred, bitterness and judgments are absolved. Known is the potential to understand and care accordingly. Meditation is a deepened connection to live life responsibly and not be dominated by past sorrows or by a self-limiting nature.

I never thought of kindness for myself. Often times with all my self-criticism and anger, I'm my own worst enemy. I seem to always be carrying a grudge, but now I realize there are other ways of how to relate and a better way to live my life. I don't have to be hostile or upset. Insight Meditation has given me a whole new perspective.

Life Practice

January 24—Patience Deepening*

Following feelings and thoughts, note the present moment. How has your day been? Is any upset carrying over from earlier? Don't force yourself into having a 'good' meditation, but recognize the moment as it is. Smiling gently in recognition helps to balance and settle one. As a discerning experience, get to know the many levels of stress as well as relating to them through a Middle Way appreciation. Without falling into self-critical reactions or judgments, a present minded recognition doesn't attach to self-dominating habits.

Meditating, acknowledge the shift away from impulsiveness as patience comes to the forefront. Physically relaxed, mental activity naturally follows to quiet down. Grounded in a present breath quality, awareness for the arising and fading of ongoing life-action moments is discerned. Realize how meditation leads to an open, settled and patient recognition. Feel how a self-centered attitude gives way to a Middle Way appreciation. If distracted, return to the breath and follow it for signs of tension and also how one bears down to judge. Feel the distraction both as a physical stress and mental tension. Relax and allow the thought to flow on and self-accumulated habits to disperse.

Through meditation follow the shift and release: self-anxiety gives way to an open, undistracted awareness; awareness gives way to the experience of the breath's quality; appreciating the breath quality gives way to patience; patience gives way and understanding self-consumed ways. The Middle Way experience reveals how a self extreme domination. Gently allow the self-burdened stress to release.

I never thought I could be this calm. I watch, relax and release. My breath mirrors each moment—self-dominated or aware. I open up to my feelings and thoughts, noting how they arise and fade. I've never been this aware.

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January 25—Walking Meditation*

After breathing and thinking, the most common activity is walking. You have to will yourself to walk and should be aware. Walking with anger, is an anger. Walking with desire, is desirous. Marching to a fantasy, is a daydreaming. Closer to the running of the bulls in Pamplona, often one arrives at a scene in a hurry and bursts through doors. Beginning walking meditation, you will be amazed at all that is required to take a step and the actual rhythm involved in walking.

Walking meditation can be done in a backyard, patio area, large front room or long hallway as well as outdoors in an open-air setting. Choose a clear, level distance of 25-30 feet. Before starting, stand to center yourself, taking in a few deep breaths to connect with the moment, then slowly begin to walk at a normal pace. Don't forget, to breathe while walking and to be mindful.

From the buttocks stretches all the connecting muscles extending down through the legs. Don't be embarrassed or think it strange, but note whether the butt is tight and stiff. Yes, the butt reflects feelings and thoughts! This is a laugh, but it is true.

As with sitting meditation, when beginning to walk there is a moment of settling down from charged feelings and distracting thoughts. Feel the affecting pressures. Calmly walk, allow the accumulation of stress and tension to release. Feel how you 'shake off' restlessness through each mindful step. Allow the tension carried at the abdomen and extending down into the buttocks and through the legs, to relax. Grasping and attached, everyday pressures dominate. In part it feels like a melting or an evaporation as the pressure is released through each step. Stepping forward, feel the weight shift through the body, then the body balance briefly by both legs, and the back foot trailing going on to push to the next step. Imagine holes or outlets at the bottom of the feet with stress and anxiety passing out through them. Feel the hourglass-like of self-accumulated energies release. Turning to come back around, pause for a moment then continue walking mindfully. Feel what it is like to walk without rushing about or a time constraint. Walk relaxed but aware. Any activity done is meaningful and revealing. The Middle Way appreciation reveals life without self-reactions.

Moving from one place to another, incorporate walking meditation going back and forth to the photocopy machine, walk to the restroom, to the break area, walking from the car into the office building, going up and down a flight of stairs or when

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walking to take out the garbage. The awareness started through sitting meditation applies and extends to all life. As an alternative to sitting, walking is energizing, refreshing and also helps clear and settle the mind. Mindfulness is applied to all actions.

I never thought walking could be considered a meditation. Normally, I'm in a rush. Walking mindfully makes a difference. Stretching with each step, I can feel how all the muscles come into play. Walking is an extension of my awareness.

January 26—Eating Meditation*

All too often food is gobbled down in chunks without so much as appreciating what is being eaten. Distracted, one is eager to get back to the next thing on the to do list or thinking about something else. Similar to sitting meditation, eating meditation is best experienced when possible as a moment of silence and a timeout.

While it may not always be possible to eat all meals in total silence and away from every distraction, while at home you certainly have control over the environment. The television doesn't need to be on blaring. The agitation translates over to eating and inattentively poking, stabbing, scooping up and stuffing food into the mouth. To be fair and allow for family conversation, begin a meal with eating in silence and then go into 'crunchy meditation' of talking softly with your spouse and children. Try directing conversation to concern people only in the immediate room and the present.

Begin by saying a few words of grace or appreciation for the moment and the food before you:

***May this food nourish my body and help my life.
 May those people without food be nourished;
 May those people without clothing be protected;
 May those people without a home have shelter;
 and may those people who are sick and diseased,
 may they be cared for and cured.
 May there be peace.***

Look at the food in the breakfast bowl. What do you see—oatmeal and fruit? Yogurt? Does the food have a scent? Is warmth felt from the bowl? Eat with awareness you are present.

Feel as the arm reaches out and the hand takes hold of the cool utensil. Gently take a spoonful of oatmeal or cereal. Feel the weight of the food on the spoon. Follow as the spoon is raised up to the mouth. Placing the food in the mouth, a breath is instinctively drawn (remember, you do breathe when eating!). Feel as the lips part and how the mouth opens. The jaw drops and the tongue curls back slightly, resting at the bottom of the mouth. The spoon slides into the mouth as it touches the tongue and the warm oatmeal the roof of the mouth. The mouth then closes around the food as the spoon slides out through closing lips. The thick texture of warmly

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cooked, cinnamon-flavored oatmeal, sprinkled with raisins as well as the sweetness of honey, is absorbed by the taste buds. The tongue moves forward and back, teeth gently breakdown the oatmeal and raisins until mashed and fine enough to swallow. The throat opens up and the chewed food then passes down through the contracting throat muscles. The food enters and warmly fills the stomach (feel the belly expanding). This is eating with present-minded awareness.

Water, tea, or juice is drunk with meals. Consciously reach for the glass. Just don't grab it. Feel the weight in the hand as the glass is brought up to the mouth and as the glass gently touches the lips. Tilt the glass up with a movement of the wrist, lips parting slightly, and the water flows into the mouth while at the same time a breath is drawn in. Feel the coolness of the water and how it washes away the food taste. Swallowing, the water passes through the throat and on down into the stomach. This is having awareness while drinking water.

Realistically, not all meals or snacks can be eaten at a leisurely pace. There are times while working through a lunch hour that you eat at the desk and type away on the computer. But taking one bite at a time instills awareness for the moment. Either careless or aware, one is what one thinks, says and does. With each absent minded gulp, the body and mind are stoked by charged habit energies.

Having awareness, meals become a pleasant experience. While eating, enjoy the food. Know what is being eaten, its taste as well as texture. Feel how the food is chewed, swallowed and how the meal enters the stomach. Be on the watch should the mind drift away. Gently smile and direct yourself back to eating. Don't rush off when finished but feel the digestive process in action.

I'm used to racing through a meal without bothering to notice what I'm doing or what I'm eating. Awareness has opened up a new respect for my life. I appreciate all my thoughts and actions. I'm eating, not day dreaming.

January 27—Making Time*

There is always some place to be found to have a quiet moment—a bench under a tree at the local park, in an open patio or courtyard, or in a quiet room at home. Fifteen to thirty minutes or more of sitting meditation is settling. As time allows, try for longer sessions. Take a timeout and a break from yourself! Feel what it is like to not have anything urgent to do and to not be distracted. You will be better for taking the time to sit.

If possible, try to take some time to sit before rushing off to work or school in the morning. Five minutes sitting in the car before entering the office can positively help shape the day. After an especially difficult day, sit to connect with feelings and note the pressures and the accompanying stress. Feel as awareness comes forward and tension dissipates. Note how the day's business begins to lift through a Middle Way assurance. Be aware of the emotional baggage and upset carried around and taken to bed (after all, where do nightmares and sleepless nights come from!). Allow the festering energy to release. With meditation, it takes a moment of initial effort to actually calm down and for stress to free up. Tell your spouse, family or friend that you need a short break and time to be alone. They will be understanding and supportive, especially when they see how you have settled down. Follow how the effects of the day disperse through realized clarity.

Take a 'green break.' At least once a day get out for some fresh air to a park, garden, walking in the sunshine, or sitting outdoors at a bench to look out at the sky. What you are doing is taking a break from being a self actor, from all the demands and conflicts. Breathe in deeply the fresh air. Smile. Feel how the cooler air penetrates the lungs and reviving. Acknowledge how all the impulsiveness and self-obsessed impulsiveness subsides. The rest does one good. If possible, walk on the shady side of the street. Walk at a normal pace but with applied mindful attention. Don't have to be a zombie. Smile and say hello to others then continue walking.

You aren't alone. In every major city meditation groups are meeting and practicing, giving guidance and support to one another as friends and practitioners. Meditation groups can be located by looking up 'religion' in the Yellow Pages of the telephone directory and calling the Buddhist group or temple for more information. The internet is also a good source of reference.

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A meditation break infuses mindfulness as a Middle Way appreciation and insight. There is always a quiet place to be found. The time out relaxes the body and refreshes the mind. Meditation can be done on commuter trains, buses, or in the car pool. Just close the eyes to connect and recognize the breath's quality. Meditation is a flexible practice and can be adapted to any locale or setting.

Depending on one's personality and schedule, there are early morning sitters or evening meditators. There are advantages to both schedules. In the morning one is fresh but usually there is limited time. The end of a busy day is a good time to sit, helping relax from a long day.

Awareness is a rewarding Middle Way balanced approach that isn't desiring or aggressive. Here in Insight Meditation's first month know and acknowledge as a present connection, the one-sided impulsiveness to connect with the Middle Way. Challenges, frustrations and fears are positively dealt with. Be a friend and gentle. Through the simple acknowledgement of the breath a deeper realization for life is discerned. In the weeks and months to come understanding and appreciation will move to a deepening commitment, wisdom and peace.

Meditation has been a wonderful addition, bringing me happiness as well as opening a whole new perspective on life. I'm making the effort to take meditation breaks throughout the day. The timeouts make a difference.

January 28—Being Present*

Sensitive and present, awareness and meditation aren't reserved only for the cushion as a quiet scheduled timeout, but how one goes on to experience and understand to disarm habitual domination. The weight and gravity, the pressure, tension and stress, feel how one jumps into self actor role playing. Whatever you do, be aware. Pulling out a chair, know what you are doing. If the mind wanders then you are divorced from the present and living a charade. Slowing down helps deepen an appreciation and awareness to better live life.

Don't get lost in day dreaming. If you have an itch then scratch the arm or cheek side, but don't let the mind wander off. It is all about being present. Don't let life pass as an absentminded self-reaction. Being aware, the moment is actively participated in. There is nothing complicated, challenging or high-minded about awareness. The four areas of mindfulness are the body (also the breath), feelings, the mind and life-action phenomena. Life is a discernment and meditation. Awareness is a personal intuition and insightful tool. Follow as patience and caring develop. Be present, keep focused and don't give in to habits.

How often is one distracted and thinks ahead to something else? Notice how the wandering mind brings additional stress. Notice, too, as the day busies how one is affected. Are you clear minded, feel tired, does frustration and anger set in, are you nervous or confused? Events and experiences rattle as multi-tasking is exhausting. Try doing one thing at a time as a present awareness. Remember to breathe and acknowledge the stressful self actor signs.

Be aware how the inner thought dialogue is often negative, abusive and cruel. If on edge or frustrated, be first aware first of the breath and physical stress (facial strain of clenched jaw and eyes aching, also abdominal and pelvic tension). Messages and signals flash between the body and mind. Acknowledge what is felt. Take a moment to be composed and smile through these self antics and blurred thoughts to reconnect with the present.

As a Middle Way appreciation, note what it is like not to be careless, overwhelmed and consumed by habits and impulsive reactions. Note how you are separated from the moment through a personal bias. Relax the tension of built up pressures. Recognize the body's language as well as the thoughts and inner dialogue. Joined

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in the present moment, connect with the body/mind communication. Feel as accumulated energies release.

Cultivating and sharing goodwill extends to all moments and experiences. Patience and gratitude are known. A Middle Way appreciation for life is experienced as it truly is without self-fantasizing. Acknowledge goodwill's beneficial qualities. Don't force a change, but realize as an awareness how habits dominate then play out as conflicts. Presently engaged, life is recognized and made better.

I feel meditation's caring affects. I catch myself dominated by habits. I find myself now listening more to other people. I'm more patient when I'm driving a car. I feel at ease and smile. I'm connected and aware rather than judging, rejecting or confrontational.

January 29—The Middle Way Connection*

Each day the commute is more congested, but nothing is accomplished by road rage. Feel how the steering wheel is tightly gripped and the brake stomped on. If it helps, play some soothing music while driving. Stuck in bumper-to-bumper grid lock, shift the car in to park, take the foot off the brake and drop your hands. Take a deep breath and exhale all the pent up stress, noting the hourglass-like affecting habitual buildup. Smiling eases the stress over the face, as does relaxing the muscles around the eyes and lips, while allowing the lower jaw to drop further releases tension. Feel the pressure at the chest and abdomen, allowing the muscles in these areas to soften. This is having awareness and bringing meditation's comfort and realization to life. Think, "red light—stop and release" slowing down, then as the light changes, "green light—at ease, go in peace."

If something breaks, shrug it off smiling. It is only a material item that can be replaced. Having to work overtime or on the weekend, pace yourself, smile, and recognize the breath's quality. Life just doesn't happen on a whim, but can be directed through a Middle Way appreciation. Take a deep breath and acknowledge the Middle Way approach as equilibrium. Note how the moment arises and fades. Aware and better practiced, feel and acknowledge the move away from self-promoted stress and conflicts to a Middle Way relief and insight.

Every moment is connected and involves awareness, putting one in contact with the present. Try doing things in an easy going manner. By trying to do too much at once and forcing an issue, one is overwhelmed. Do less, if possible, or at least apply added awareness for what is taking place rather than struggle with the experience.

Even the bathroom is a moment of calm mindfulness rather than day dreaming or plotting. The bathroom reveals natural bodily functions. Afterwards, calmly flush the toilet, wash and rinse off the hands, then towel away the dampness. Yes, even the bathroom is an insightful moment!

Pleasantly do chores and make them a happy involvement rather than grinding teeth and rushing to get through things. When answering the telephone, allow for three or four rings rather than jumping up like a Pavlov dog at the first sound. While washing dishes apply directed awareness as well as being mindful when taking out the garbage. Note, smile and breathe in recognition. Life is a simple, uncomplicated joy

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when not ruled as a self-actor. This is the function and experience of the Middle Way appreciation. Rushing about, catch yourself and come back to a comfortable Middle Way pace.

Allow for a quiet and refreshing break. Five to ten minute instances are beneficial to slowing down the self-frenzy. Afterwards, don't be in a hurry to start up again—remember to continue applying awareness! Extend the calm and joy from meditation to all actions and thoughts whether at the workplace or when interacting with family and friends. Be a listener rather than spouting disapproval.

Everything is a joyful awareness, bringing a clear and steadied Middle Way recognition for life. The mind may wander, but awareness connects as patience. Life moves from habitual instances to a personal recognition and fulfillment. How nice to actively join with and experience life rather than to impulsively charge ahead. Acknowledge how patience and goodwill are a benefit.

Back from work or from being outside, don't just burst in through the front door and begin doing things robot-like. Realize the actions as a present awareness. Acknowledge the Middle Way's ease and harmony. Feel as habit energies are defused.

I never realized how keyed up I was. Go, go, go...do, do, do. Yes, my breathing is closer to panting and my mind races wildly at so many rpm's a second. This is like being on the verge of a nervous breakdown. Now I catch myself and settle down. I don't have to be this charged up person or actor. Following a Middle Way connection, I go with the flow of things.

January 30—Awareness as Joyful*

Don't be hard on yourself. A budding sensitivity now carries over as patience to all experiences and encounters. Feel if any nagging upset or anxiety is unsettling. Note where the body is tight and clenched. Breathe deeply to relax. Don't go to bed worried or angry. Conclude the day with a settling meditation and peaceful thoughts. Do a short body scan and feel as habits are released. Smile in joyful recognition to know what you are thinking and doing. Smile knowing release from the self torment. A clear and quiet mind makes for a restful sleep while wild dreams reflect a self-centered obsession.

When at a store or mall, for example, don't feel overwhelmed by the crowds. Walk calmly at a joyful pace. Other people may be in a hurry but you walk effortlessly. Stuck in traffic, put the car in park, take the foot off the brake, place the hands cupped on the lap and take a few deep breaths. Cheerfully do chores or errands as a joyful experience rather than clenching teeth and rushing to finish. Feel the release of self-accumulated habitual energies.

Be careful of burn out. Observe one's self for stress, unhappiness or laziness. Be a friend. Don't be cornered or limited into do's and don'ts. The Middle Way is a steady, gradual and patient recognition and fulfillment—not angry, indulgent or fearful. As hurry and impatience creeps in, notice how one knots up in self-frustration and feel inconvenienced as expectations aren't met. Know, too, what it is like to release tension and anxiety. Be patient and kind with others. Feel what it is like not have a self-agenda. Meditation is a true life understanding.

An 'enemy' of meditation is sleepiness or drowsiness. As the body relaxes, the temptation at times to nod off is strong. Try meditating with eyes open, staring down at the floor (light acts as a stimulus keeping you alert), or get up and take a short walk to boost energy. However, the body may very well be telling you that it needs a short nap, but don't give in every time. There are many distractions and temptations drawing one from meditating. Consider everything as a part of life practice, including demanding moments.

Try setting up a spiritual room or practice corner in the home or apartment. A small altar with flowers and a place to burn incense helps creates a comfortable setting. Do whatever it takes to bring enthusiasm and joy while meditating. Make the moment pleasurable awareness. Know caring, patience, generosity and goodwill.

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What a relief not to get the better of myself! I've been dominated and distracted by impulses for too long. Meditation and the Middle Way are guiding me away from my anxious and hurried ways. I feel less worried and end my day on a happy note.

January 31—Awareness as Insight*

Meditation helps as relaxation, but once relaxed meditation is an investigation and insight for life; a Middle Way appreciation removed from self-obsessed behavior.

Everything involves caring and is mindfully linked—how people are speak to and the tone used; allowing another car to go ahead rather than driving with road rage; sharing to help another person; how one enters or leaves a room. Goodwill and gratitude are both a method and reward as awareness is a true blessing. Kindness takes one from self-oppression to a connected and settled Middle Way recognition.

Be dedicated. Waking each day consider how you will offer goodwill and generosity, share and do favors, and have patience for others. This includes being patient with one's self! Smile more, smile much more. Smile as things get hectic at home or at the work place. Be flexible and easygoing rather than tense and edgy. Don't allow dominating habits to win out. Recognize the self-friction creeping in. Smiling, radiates confidence, happiness, kindness and a trusting presence. Smile in friendship.

Feeling the urge to snap back at someone or become angry, have the patience to hear the other person out without taking what is being said as a personal attack. Note how everyday reactions building up, body chemistry changing and mind narrow stressfully. Tolerant and accepting, even if nothing changes at least you aren't enraged, rude, cruel or out of control.

Should hateful or angry thoughts come up during the day, try offering an immediate mental blessing towards the person or situation. Say to yourself, have a nice day. I won't be angry. I'll bend. May there be peace. Do anything but give in to an angry outburst. Try feeling the lower degree of disappointment rather than blind rage. Goodwill is a natural extension of awareness and a practically applied insight for life. Recognize the subtle and beneficial changes as life becomes manageable. Simple, direct and real, body (and breath), feelings, mind and life actions are a grounded connection. Realized are how habits complicate life.

Volunteering whenever possible (even if only on weekends or holidays) is a way of renewing ties with kindness and goodwill. Other people in turn are helped and are inspired by your actions. All efforts to share goodwill make a difference. Compassion cannot be denied.

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I feel my life changing—opening up. Meditation is helping me to know myself.



FEBRUARY— From Monkey Mind to Concentration to Wise Actions



At times closer to a wild, screeching monkey, the mind is easily distracted, provoked and reacts. Even while sleeping dreams are disturbed by compulsive habits.

Here in February's meditations the Monkey Mind (also referred to as hindrances—desire, hatred, laziness, restlessness and doubt) will be understood and tamed. It isn't enough to be aware and have concentration, Insight Meditation reveals the underlying motives—impulsively driven as a self actor or responsibly connected and having wise action. The role of purposeful action defines your life story. Habitual tendencies are now accessible and reckoned with.

When a moment or experience isn't gratifying, meaningful, stimulating or satisfying, one is victimized by boredom and a short attention span. How many times while talking face-to-face with a person has the mind wandered off to think of someone else, fantasize something, or being somewhere else? Boredom is sneaky in how fickle the mind is and how easily sidetracked it is. The self absorbed mind is anything but stable and secure as it wanders and reacts.

Five Wise Actions (or Five Precepts) are emphasized as a commitment to understanding, improving and living a less problematic life—goodwill as respect for honoring all life, honesty through speech and communication, sharing and generosity, sexual responsibility for intimate relationships, and a clear-minded sobriety rather than drug and alcohol indulged. More than a dictate of do's and don'ts, the Five Wise Actions are a reflection for is thought, said and done. The role of Insight Meditation and Middle Way appreciation is a direct experience of life

without self-complications. As motives and intentions become clear, everything has its consequences—self-inflicted or wisely engaged.

February 1—A Jabber Wocky*

“Wonderful, indeed, it is to subdue the mind, so difficult to subdue, ever swift, and seizing whatever it desires. A tamed mind brings happiness.” DH 35

No sooner does one move to get out of bed and before the feet have ever touched the floor, the mind begins to ramble on—what should be done, what needs to be done, and what would like to be done. You evaluate and calculate what is best. At work thoughts wander to think about something more entertaining or drifts to a favorite fantasy. Anxious about having to do something one would rather not, an upset backlash emerges. Uncomfortable with certain situations and people, restlessness and a worried frustration disconnects you from the present moment. The self actor imagination runs amuck. Round and round the mind is distracted without a break from the dizzying Monkey Mind (even sleep is disturbed by dreams brought on by compulsive habits).

Now sitting to meditate, acknowledge relief through a settling body scan. Slowly the exhausting mental runaround begins to quiet. Aware of the breath quality as rough, the hourglass-like buildup from ongoing stressful activities weighs heavily. Notice how when first sitting the mind prattles on and is a disconnected blur. Recognize the breath quality and Monkey Mind dominating symptoms. Feel the gradual shift from everyday preoccupations to a settled Middle Way appreciation.

Through Insight Meditation you are aware, relaxed, settled, and unworried. The mind wanders, but is gently guided back to focus on the breath. Begin to notice how the mind strays when bored and concentration is compromised. Here the Monkey Mind distractions are known. Having patience, feel how the body calms and the mind settles. Without any demands, sense the self-pressured impulses beginning to release. Follow the breath’s quality and mental activity, from tense Monkey Mind bewilderment to a mindful attention. Used to being preoccupied and involved, the mind looks for action and stimulation to indulge a self-fantasy.

I slowly settle down. What a relief to be aware. I bring myself out from the exhausting runaround and feel relieved.

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February 2—The Monkey Mind*

“Sensual desire is an obstacle, a hindrance that overwhelms awareness and weakens discernment. Ill will...Sloth and drowsiness...Restlessness and anxiety...Uncertainty is an obstacle, a hindrance that overwhelms awareness and weakens discernment. These are the five obstacles, hindrances that overwhelm awareness and weaken discernment.” AN 5, 51

Desire/craving—What do I have to do to get a...Wouldn't it be nice to have...How about...What I wouldn't do for a ...I can't wait for...I don't want this, I want...What I really need is...Where is that special someone in my life?

Hatred/aversion—I don't want to...That's not for me...Get away from me...I hate you...You're wrong...I'm not doing that...You scare me...No way—never...I won't have any part of it...I don't like this...I don't trust you.

Laziness/fatigue—I just don't know what to do any more...I've tried everything and it's always the same...It can wait until tomorrow...What's the use...It's not going to matter anyway...No big deal...I'm tired...I need a break.

Restlessness/worry—I can't sit and meditate...It doesn't feel right unless I'm busy...There's always something that needs to be done...I don't know why I did it—I just had to...That's just the way I am...I can't help myself.

Doubt/skepticism—I can't do it...I was never any good...I'm not sure...It's better if I don't...What difference will it make...What can I do about it...This is the way it's always been.

Does any of this sound like someone you know? Shaking your head and a little too close for comfort, it sounds a lot like yourself! Who is in control—you or the Monkey Mind?

Calm and settled after a body-scan, aware of the communication between the body and mind, feel the unsettling and distraction. A non-stop echoing voice, the mind screeches as though on fast forward. A blur of impulses, associations, and memories blend together. Awareness and concentration lapse, the present an overwhelming experience. Hearing and acknowledging this inner voice is important. Previously life occurred haphazardly. Unaware and acting on dominating habits, you

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are present and understanding. Don't be hard on yourself. There are few people whose attention is controlled. Ironically, most people have an actual suspicion and fear of being quiet as it just doesn't feel 'right or natural.' Occupied and pushed to the limit, action gives a false sense of being alive. Meditation is a pause and break from the demanding, non-stop runaround.

Acknowledge the breath's quality as well as the physical and mental state. As a present awareness, note if you are acting out of habit or are clear minded; distracted or relaxed as an open-flowing awareness. Reflecting a basic uneasiness, follow the physical pressures and mental stress. Feel the contracting stress. Sense the deeper strains and affects of the Monkey Mind. These are the hindrances of desire, hatred, laziness, restlessness and doubt. Simply follow how the mind flits about and preoccupies itself. Like a radio station not properly tuned in, the present moment is distorted and unclear. When the self actor dominates, life is a confused and high-pressured struggle.

Like a spinning top, self-associated habits are dizzying and exhausting. Don't struggle with the moment, but acknowledge the breath's quality. Slowly release the hourglass-like buildup of habit energies. Breathe, relax, and release these subtle disturbances. Clear-minded concentration isn't forced, but a centered Middle Way approach is followed. Toning down to a tolerable whisper rather than a chaotic self-cacophony, note the shift from distraction to awareness. Connect with the grounded familiar areas of body (and the breath), feelings, mind and life-actions as a present awareness.

Note the separation from the Monkey Mind distractions to a patient and composed awareness. Moving away from a whirlwind of demands, a Middle Way relief and intuition is known.

I can be quiet and calm to be with the moment as it is. I sense the different instances in my life. There are my habits and impulses, and there is being aware. I feel relieved from the Monkey Mind.

February 3—Boredom*

***“Through initiative, heedfulness,
restraint, and self-control,
the wise would make
an island
no flood can submerge.” DH 25***

Easily distracted and impatient, when a moment or experience, isn't gratifying or satisfying, the mind drifts off bored. How many times while talking face-to-face with someone does the mind wander off to think about another person, fantasize about being someplace else, or doing something different?

Less menacing and tuned out, boredom is a low-level version of hatred as judgment. Begin by acknowledging how boredom sneaks up to sidetrack you. Cutting vegetables, driving along or even during an intimate moment, boredom becomes a full-frenzied Monkey Mind distraction. Tapping a foot, whistling a tune, rolling eyes, scratching one's head, clucking the tongue or yawning—all are signs of boredom.

The key to dealing with the Monkey Mind hindrances is to realize how boredom strikes, and lulls you away from the present. Once the attention drifts and is off guard, the Monkey Mind and subconscious habits take over. Although boredom is the first instance in concentrated breakdown, the specific five distractions (desire, hatred, laziness, restlessness, and doubt) reflect a self-obsessed regard. When the attention is blurred, one is unable to understand or act reasonably. Being distracted is like using dusted over eyeglasses. Life and reality are unclear. Boredom and carelessness take over.

Feel as attention and awareness drift off. Out of habit, the mind searches to be active, for something interesting, complimentary and engaging. Craving, imagination and desire stimulate boredom. Lost in a heavy fog, note a light headedness as the mind drifts off. A daydreaming mist compromises awareness. Follow how the attention wanes and the breath constricts as pressure-filled thoughts take over. Note the accompanying physical stress and mental strain.

Become acquainted with the impressions and disguised boredom. A fearful experience is a discomfort and preference to be someplace else, a dull moment and

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the mind begins daydreaming. As a side-tracked fantasy, feel how boredom is pervasive, causing physical tension and even pain.

Settled and centered on the breath's quality, acknowledge how boredom plays out. Like a puppy pulling hard on a leash, note how the mind turns away. Simply direct your awareness back to the breath. Observe how the body reacts and tenses up. The Middle Way appreciation isn't critical or judgmental. Simply follow how the mind contracts when bored. Settling deeper into the meditation, distinguish the mind's range. Patiently guide the mind back from the disruption to follow the breath.

My mind plays tricks on me. I see how I become distracted and then the Monkey Mind follows. Slowly I'm realizing how the mind operates.

February 4—Dropping Your Guard*

***“They’re addicted to heedlessness
— dullards, fools —
while one who is wise
cherishes heedfulness
as his highest wealth.” DH 26***

Charged by dominating impulses and reactions, feel how the mind contracts. Thoughts flash then disappear and are followed by another thought. Bored, inattentive and unable to focus, this is the Monkey Mind. But what is driving the Monkey Mind? A lack of concentration as well as confusion brought about by self-identification. Wants, needs, lust, hatred, likes and dislikes make for an unsettled life. Meditation reveals how subconscious experiences compel one to act out. At this time in meditation practice identify the thought moment, but as concentration and insight settle and mature, realize how subconscious hamper your life. The Monkey Mind’s frenzy stands out.

Deadlines at work, errands to run, something else one would rather be doing—a hodgepodge of thoughts stir during meditation. Feel how the stress affects the breath and body as a literal suffocating pressure. Desire, annoyance and confusion become the norm. The present may be a challenge but the Middle Way appreciation avoids the extremes of gratification and aggression to a clarified understanding of life.

An hourglass-like of accumulated pressures, note how the Monkey Mind distractions are consuming and a burden. Starting at the head and working down, relax the facial muscles (forehead, eyes, jaw and lips). Feel as the pressure over the cranium literally softens. Moving slowly along, relax and allow the all-consuming Monkey Mind energy to dissipate. All the nerve endings extending through the body relax. Note how self-preoccupation begins to weaken. Boredom is really just a self-reaction. Feel as habitual energies and impulses dissipate.

Note the chest as well as abdominal and pelvic pressure. Lowly the mind follows to settle down. Presently engaged, awareness is a joy and relief. Acknowledge as the pulsing imagination settles. As a Middle Way appreciation removed from gratification and aggression, note how as a conscious attention the mind opens and

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expands. Observe the passing thoughts without judgment or criticism. A present awareness for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions is established.

I feel how bored and distracting thoughts lead me astray. So much is revealed through the breath. I feel where I'm grasping and tight. I relax and open to the experience. Amazing, I sense my body and mind settling down.

February 5—The Wandering Mind (Sense Desire)*

“Imagine a bowl of water mixed with lac, tumeric, dark green or crimson dye, such that a man with good eyesight examining the reflection of his face in it would not be able to know or see his face as it actually is. In the same way, when one remains with awareness possessed by sensual passion, overcome with sensual passion, and neither knows nor sees the escape, from sensual passion...” SN 46, 55

Listen to the Wandering Mind—desiring, lustful, needy and craving. If only I could...just a little more...I deserve this...If they can, why not me...It's my turn to enjoy. The breath is labored and the mind pulses with thoughts. Classically referred to as so many bright colors gleaming and reflecting on a watery surface, desirous attention flutters and follows after enticing and alluring possibilities while the body is in an aroused state.

Craving change, seeking something more attractive and attention grabbing, follow how the Wandering Mind begins. Boredom creeps in and acts as a catalyst. One would rather be somewhere else or do something else. Now centered and settled, ease deeper into the meditation. Note how the body and mind respond to desire—physically stimulated, the mind actively seeks gratification. Acknowledge how boredom strikes. Believing that desire is a personal right, it has actually been conditioned through self-identification. From having favorite colors to not getting by without that special something or having emotional preferences, desire and craving are a self-indulgence.

Feel how concentration narrows and contracts. Scratching one's head, looking around, or humming a tune, the mind searches. Ever so deceptively, a compromised focus is disabling as a Monkey Mind and attention flit about. Be patient. Follow the breath's quality and acknowledge how the body is excited and the breath sputters in short, tense gasps. Follow the moment arises from distraction. Connected with the breath, as a present awareness weakens, the Monkey Mind subsides. A calm Middle Way appreciation emerges that isn't indulging or aggressive. Gradually release the self-identification.

The fallout from of desire is that it is unrelenting. It is the itch that can't be stopped from scratching. Desire needs more or something more alluring as it feeds on itself. Bored and distracted, the Monkey Mind leaves one reeling and searching.

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Seemingly harmless, you are deceived into thinking that it is all right to desire. After all, what is wrong with having some fun? The draw back is that desire gains momentum until all control is lost. Like a child in a toy store, the excitement is too much. The self actor is careless and unable to cope.

Even meditation can be a desire as a certain outcome is expected. A special teacher or 'enlightenment' is sought. All of this is desire. Feel how craving festers as an unhappiness. Fantasy, infatuation and seduction are the characteristics of desire. In the short term, desires like a vacation are enjoyable. But at some point you have to wake-up as problems and conflicts arise. Desire is like playing musical chairs where eventually one winds up on the floor. The Middle Way appreciation is a common sense connection with the world. An understanding for life is discerned.

As a present awareness, acknowledge desire's unsettling affect. Feel how the breath is tight with anticipation. Note, too, how the mind narrows and searches. Following the breath, sense the facial muscles, chest and abdominal pressures. Presently aware and connected, feel the hourglass-like habitual buildup begin to disperse. Note how the mind is no longer bored or provoked by desire. Sense the steadiness, reassurance and composure that is the Middle Way intuition.

Awareness is a patient connection. Not everything merits one's attention. Less impulsive and emotionally driven, through a Middle Way appreciation begin to realize what is beneficial and what is detrimental in life. Through meditation's composure the Wandering Mind is disengaged. Feel as the breath settles. Note how the body relaxes and the mind goes on to calm down. Habits dispersing, feel how desire frees up. Goodwill is known. The Wandering Mind quiets through a Middle Way appreciation. Acknowledge what is detrimental and beneficial. You don't have to believe the self actor. The Wandering Mind slowly settles to a present clarity.

I get bored, distracted and then become excited. I can say 'no' to desire. I recognize my breath and know the Wandering Mind. Not everything I desire is good for me.

February 6—The Whining Mind (Ill-will and Aversion)*

“Now imagine a bowl of water heated on a fire, boiling and bubbling over, such that a man with good eyesight examining the reflection of his face in it would not be able to know or see his face as it actually is. In the same way, when one remains with awareness possessed by ill will, overcome with ill will, and neither knows nor sees the escape from ill will once it has arisen, then one neither knows nor sees what is for one's own benefit, or for the benefit of others, or for the benefit of both...” SN 46, 55

Listen to the Whining Mind—hateful, judging, bothered, critical, averse and biased. I don't like this...This isn't right...Gosh, that's ugly...How stupid...What good is this...I don't want to. The Whining Mind takes an innocent situation or experience and makes it into a personally judged and projected hostility. The breath is tight and restricted while the mind seems heavy and pained. Classically referred to as boiling water, ill-will along with aversion, hatred and anger, the body becomes flushed and hot (eyes bugging out, heart racing and head pounding) while the mind froths and vents. Concentration and composure are abandoned.

Distracted by aversion, unable to cope and seeking to flee, fear and uncertainty as insecurity are compromising. Nothing goes right and anger makes everything wrong. Feel the resistance and recoil both physically and mentally as the moment is viewed as a threat. But things are rarely as bad and one-sided as they are made out to be. The Whining Mind has gotten the better of you.

Notice how boredom creeps in as a catalyst, triggering the Whining Mind to criticize, to be frustrated and angry, disgruntled and malcontent, indignant and defensive. Now centered, ease deeper into the meditation to note how the body and mind respond to ill-will—the body tense and attention narrowing. Nothing working out, one feels like screaming or run off. From having certain dislikes to being short tempered, ill-will and aversion reflect a self-centered domination. Adding up how many times a day things are complained about, disliked and dismissed, criticized, judgment passed, discriminated, or have false expectations, you would be amazed. Every few seconds the Whining Mind sounds off. Every bit as deceptive as desire, the final outcome of the Whining Mind leads to frustration, outrage, and unhappiness.

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Follow how boredom gives way to ill-will. Ever so deceptively, the mind is compromised and disabled by the hateful Monkey Mind. The Whining Mind becomes defensive. Follow the breath's quality and how the body recoils as the breath sputters in short, tense gasps. Connected with the present breath quality, awareness weakens the Whining Mind's domination. An intuitive Middle Way appreciation not indulged in or aggressive comes forward. Gradually the self actor is released.

Acknowledge how the Whining Mind springs up when encountering negative and challenging experiences. The present moment becomes a battle ground. Frowned upon is anyone or anything that gets in one's way. But where did these harsh thoughts come from? Unaware and sidetracked, anger and hatred aren't the culprits so much as how boredom and the Monkey Mind fickleness are a distraction.

Aware that concentration has lapsed, refocus to connect with the breath's quality. Feel how the breath is labored while tension increases at the forehead. Temples pounding, mouth dry, a constricting pressure at the chest, stomach sour, blood pressure and pulse rates soar. Like painful electric shocks, acknowledge how detrimental anger is to your well being. Anxious and out of control, self-identification dominates to feel threatened, insecure and unsettled.

Settled and aware, acknowledge the shift away from everyday passions. Release the habitual build up through a Middle Way appreciation to realize what is beneficial and what is detrimental in life. Feel how an intuitive recognition disengages the Whining Mind. Sense how the body relaxes and the mind settles. The Whining Mind releases to a Middle Way stability. Don't believe the self actor.

Life isn't only defined by anger and upset. Open to patience, acceptance and goodwill. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way direct you to wholesome and wise experiences. Now gently defuse the ongoing habitual conflicts. Feelings are sharp, the mind is tense and actions are upsetting. Acknowledge what is detrimental and beneficial. Allow the hourglass-like habitual buildup to empty and disperse. Relax the body (jaw clenched, eye strain, lips pursed tightly, chest, abdominal and pelvic pressure) as well as the strained and unsettled attention. The Whining Mind ever so slowly settles down to a present moment clarity.

Like a teapot boiling over, I know how I am when I get angry—I'm out of control. But now I catch myself. It's up to me. I can go overboard or follow my awareness. Anger and disappointment aren't the only way to go.

February 7—The Sluggish Mind (Laziness and Fatigue)*

“Now imagine a bowl of water covered with algae and slime, such that a man with good eyesight examining the reflection of his face in it would not be able to know or see his face as it actually is. In the same way, when one remains with awareness possessed by sloth and drowsiness, overcome with sloth and drowsiness, and neither knows nor sees the escape from sloth and drowsiness once it has arisen, then one neither knows nor sees what is for one’s own benefit, or for the benefit of others, or for the benefit of both...” SN 46, 55

Listen to the Sluggish Mind—It can wait...What’s the hurry...There’s always later...What’s the difference...I’ve done enough already...I don’t want to be bothered... Not just now....It’s not the right time...I’m tired. There is always an excuse. The breath is heavy and labored and the mind dull and slow. Classically referred to as water covered over by moss, stagnant and not circulating, the Sluggish Mind is unclear, hazy and distorted. A depressing lethargy and unable to move, rigidity and dullness set in. Reality is distant. Like children who dawdle rather than do something that they are told to do, laziness and fatigue come out as an escape from life’s demands. The self actor is very good at denial and deception.

Feel how the mind narrows and contracts. In this fast-paced world it is easy to be overwhelmed. Expectations are high and demands are higher. A feeling of helplessness is undermining. Sense how the breath tightens to the point of hyperventilating and suffocation. Note how the mind contracts and ‘freezes up.’ Overwhelmed by responsibilities and dealings with others, exhausted, trapped and confused, the Sluggish Mind is like an ostrich wanting to bury its head in the sand. The present moment is lost sight of. Ever so deceptively, one’s focus is compromised and blurred, disabled by the Monkey Mind.

Dullness gives way to weariness, weariness to laziness and procrastination as a disconnection from the present. Heavy, slow and plodding, feel the Sluggish Mind’s burden. Apathy leads to exhaustion and indecisiveness. Note the self-consumed burden. The body is numb while the mind is unclear and unable to focus. Now gently guide your awareness. Allow the breath to relax in gentle increments. The accumulated hourglass-like of self-stress is stagnating. Note the shift of passing energy as a Middle Way clarity unfolds. Follow as the breath relaxes and the mind expands. Habitual pent up energy dispersing, sense how the body relaxes and the

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mind settles. Feel the fatigue beginning to lift. Patience and goodwill emerge. As the Sluggish Mind is released, a Middle Way intuition is experienced. Gradually the self actor is released.

Awareness and patience connect you with a clarified present. Not everything merits one's attention. Less impulsive and prone to emotional outbursts, acknowledge what is detrimental and what is beneficial. You don't have to believe the self actor. The Sluggish Mind slowly settles to a present clarity.

I get tired during the day as my energy drops. I realize how work and demands affect me. I need to pace myself. I'm becoming more aware and patient.

February 8—The Black Cloud Mind (Restlessness and Remorse)*

“Now imagine a bowl of water ruffled by the wind, disturbed, and covered with waves, such that a man with good eyesight examining the reflection of his face in it would not be able to know or see his face as it actually is. In the same way, when one remains with awareness possessed by restlessness and anxiety, overcome with restlessness and anxiety, and neither knows nor sees the escape from restlessness and anxiety once it has arisen, then one neither knows nor sees what is for one's own benefit, or for the benefit of others, or for the benefit of both...” SN 46, 55

Listen to the Black Cloud Mind—I just can't cope anymore...I try, but always fail...It's just who I am...I don't have time...I'm too busy...I would if I could. Classically referred to as water churned up by strong winds, restlessness and worry whip one into an agitated, unnerved and disturbed frenzy. Breathing is constricted while the mind is rigid and dark.

Worried and unsure, nervous and irritable, there is an attitude of negativity and gloom hanging over everything and how you communicate. Unsteady, quick-firing thoughts compromise the mind. The Black Cloud Mind is a symptom of a busy life and being overwhelmed, unsettled, anxious and insecure. Habits impulsively project anxiety. The world is perceived as hostile and meditation becomes a restless challenge.

Notice how boredom creeps in as a catalyst for the Black Cloud Mind's depression. Easing into meditation, note how the body and mind respond to restlessness—body charged and attention wandering and unsettled. Acknowledging how the Black Cloud Mind is overwhelming. Doubts are haunting and keep one off balance and on edge. Feel the short sharp breaths while the mind is narrowed and pressured. A body scan reveals the ongoing agitation. Gently relax the anxiety. Connected with the breath, feel the shift as awareness weakens the Monkey Mind's grip. Open to the calm Middle Way observance. The Black Cloud Mind begins to lift. Settled and relieved, joy and ease prevail.

How would you treat a nervous guest? Welcome the uneasiness, anxiety or discomfort as a friend. Don't fight or get caught up in the unsettling. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to ease the tension. Be accepting of the moment and when not at your best. Smile through the Black Cloud Mind. A calming presence,

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Insight Meditation and the Middle Way are setting. Restlessness requires gentleness and understanding. Feel where you are resisting. Allow the negative energy to disperse and release rather than struggle with it. The Middle Way appreciation isn't indulging or aggressive. Gradually self-domination is released.

Breathe deeply and exhale the apprehension. Note how the breath is charged with insecurities, personal doubts and remorse. The Inner Child Meditation (January 20) helps bring closure to personal issues. Stifled and closer to hyperventilating, take a few deep breaths as composure. Be gentle and accepting. Smile. Don't look at the big picture, but simply connect with the present moment breath quality and the pressured symptoms arising. Feel the tranquility and how you settle down.

Less impulsive and emotional, as a Middle Way appreciation realize what is detrimental and what is beneficial. Not everything merits one's attention. Meditation is settling and subdues self-anxiety. Sense how the body relaxes and the mind settles as habitual pent up energy disperses. Negativity is released as goodwill and patience emerge. The Black Cloud Mind settles down to a Middle Way appreciation that isn't indulging or aggressive. Acknowledge what is beneficial and what is detrimental. Don't believe the self actor. The Black Cloud Mind slowly settles and gives way to a present clarity.

I'm too hard on myself. Pressure gets to me and I feel like I can't cope. I just want to run and hide. Now I better understand what's going on—I get nervous, overwhelmed and anxious. Breathing deeply a few times helps me relax. Instead of trying to force the issue, I follow the Middle Way without judgment or fighting.

February 9—The Quicksand Mind (Skeptical Doubt)*

“Now imagine a bowl of water stirred up, turbid, muddied, and left in the dark, such that a man with good eyesight examining the reflection of his face in it would not be able to know or see his face as it actually is. In the same way, when one remains with awareness possessed by uncertainty, overcome with uncertainty, and neither knows nor sees the escape from uncertainty once it has arisen, then one neither knows nor sees what is for one's own benefit, or for the benefit of others, or for the benefit of both...” SN 46, 55

Listen to the Quicksand Mind—It’s happening all over again...I can’t do it...I give up...Everyone can but me...I try but it doesn’t work...It just wasn’t meant to be. Classically referred to as thick, gooey and sludge-like, skeptical doubt makes a wasteland of your life. Breathing labored, the body is tense and mind inflexible. Frightened and insecure, the present is uncertain and an unwelcome experience. Doubt is undermining. Everything seems remote, unfriendly, hopeless, and overwhelming. Nothing is right. Apprehensive, a self-imposed wedge separates you from the world.

Notice how boredom creeps in as a catalyst for the Quicksand Mind, receding and tumbling into depressing cycles. Now centered, ease deeper into the meditation and note how the body and mind respond to doubt—heavy yet sharp and painful, attention drawn and collapsing painfully. Ever so deceptively, concentration is compromised and disabled by the Quicksand Mind. As the attention trips up and wanes, be patient and follow as the breath sputters and body recoils. Following the breath’s quality weakens the Monkey Mind. Open to a calm Middle Way appreciation that is neither indulging nor aggressive. Gradually the self actor is released.

The Quicksand Mind is potentially the most challenging and threatening distraction because it is a compromising negativity leading to despair. Unrealistic expectations become a trap and potentially stop one from meditating all together. The body is tense and mind closes, unable to see beyond imagined insecurities. Paralyzed with doubts and indecision, one becomes an enemy, unable to commit to or complete anything. An out of control imagination runs one in circles. When distracted by the Quicksand Mind things seem far worse than they are. Even one’s own shadow is frightening.

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Breathe deeply to connect with a present awareness. Acknowledge the fear and nervousness reflected as a shallow, strained respiration, tension at the forehead and temples while licking dry lips. The stomach is jumpy as anxious thoughts flash. Doubts play out as havoc to an almost seasick-like feeling, woozy, off balance and uncertain.

Headaches, eye-strain, migraines, stomach symptoms, back and pelvic problems, the Quicksand Mind arises from a self-obsessed view. Now through a breath awareness begin to relax the many pressure points. Unhinging the jaw stretches the facial muscles. Dropping the shoulders relaxes the back. Allow the abdominal and pelvic muscles to soften. Begin to sense the shift from everyday tension to a mindful release. Note the flashing thoughts and how doubt weigh on you. Feel as consciousness narrows to a worried self-affliction. Breathe naturally to relax the self-resistance. Gently allow the attention to release and the habitual buildup to release.

Less impulsive and emotionally driven, follow the Middle Way appreciation. Goodwill and patience releases self-insecurities. Realize that not everything merits one's attention. Acknowledge what is beneficial and what is detrimental. You don't have to believe the self actor. The Quick Sand Mind ever so slowly settles to a present clarity.

Like carrying a heavy weight around my neck, I feel how doubt burdens me. But I can set aside all the gloom and go on to realize relief from my one-sided preoccupations. When I'm aware, the Monkey Mind disappears.

February 10—Awareness Focusing Technique as Concentration* (Initial Contact, Sustained Contact, Interest, ‘Joy,’ and One-Pointed Clarity)

“...directed thought, evaluation, rapture, pleasure, singleness of mind, contact, feeling, perception, intention, consciousness, desire, decision, persistence, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention—he ferreted them out one after another. Known to him they arose, known to him they remained, known to him they subsided. He discerned, ‘So this is how these qualities, not having been, come into play. Having been, they vanish.’ He remained unattracted and unrepelled with regard to those qualities, independent, detached, released, dissociated, with an awareness rid of barriers.” MN 111

Whether thinking, looking at something or simply having an experience, apply awareness and attention for the moment. Most times experiences are taken for granted and boredom turns into a careless, Monkey Mind confusion. Though seemingly technical, Awareness Focusing as concentration (Initial Contact, Sustained Contact, Interest, ‘Joy’ and One-Pointed Clarity) is a deepening meditative concentration and understanding for life while taming the Monkey Mind. In five quick flashing sequences the mind focuses. It is action that attracts, draws you in and makes for conscious attention. Experiencing and learning how the mind functions helps realize how the present forms to affect one. The Monkey Mind antics revealed, the mind seems to focus instantaneously, but Insight Meditation slows down the process

Settled and centered through a body scan, begin to note how awareness converges. Imagine, for example, an ant crawling on your arm. At first the small bug isn’t felt. Then a sensation tingles and awareness perks up, responds and turns to the present curiosity. Initial Contact takes place as an awareness for this first contacted experience. Here attention is vague and not yet focused. Note how breathing is heavy and labored as the mind turns toward the tingling action.

Connecting with the present moment, though not yet fully realized, feel how the attention begins to be absorbed as you glance over at the arm. From passive to stimulated to alert then to conscious, follow how the mind is contacted and focuses. Drawing in a breath, awareness then turns towards the sensation.

Initial Contact then gives way to a Sustained Contact attention. Provoked by the ant, the focus is now keenly on the crawling sensation on the skin. Though not yet

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looking over to see what it is, at this point curiosity is stimulated. Sustained Contact is the mind turning to identify the subject-action. Note how the breath tenses slightly while the mind narrows as a Sustained Contacted absorption.

Continuing with the Awareness Focusing as concentration, contacted attention gives way to true 'Interest' for the action sensation. Here the thought as recognition forms, but has not yet quite absorbed to a full conscious recognition. Note how the breath tenses in applied 'Interest.' The mind responds to bear down on the subject, breath contracting and attention occupied to identify the action.

At this instance the external ant action and a self-attention reflect a simple focus without any projected interference. Meditative composure as a present awareness follows the breath and mental subtleties. Feel how the mind flexes to concentrate. At this point, the self actor hasn't emerged to take charge and be afflicted as a Monkey Mind distraction.

Continuing with Awareness Focusing, Interest gives way to 'Joy' (though in the case of an ant it may not exactly be joyful). 'Joy' refers to the attention turning as realized and cognizant, identifying and labeling the ant. It is a 'Joy' to know and be aware in the present as one's attention joins with the ant experience. 'Joy' is a recognition just before making a decision or having an impulsive reaction. Acknowledge how the breath is held and briefly pauses before the instance of judgment and identification.

'Joy' gives way to a One-Pointed Clarity or concentration forming to engage and register the crawling ant. Before giving way to any self-reactions, the attention is absorbed in watching the crawling ant (neither boredom nor a self-projected judgment have emerged). The breath exhales slightly as the mind focuses to connect with the ant.

Insight Meditation is an intuitive and personal experience to better relate to life. No longer a victim of impulsive habits, the Monkey Mind is controlled and tamed. You may now blow the imaginary ant off your arm! Take a few deep breaths to relax for a moment.

As you become better practiced in Awareness Focusing as concentration, each attentive link goes on to block and subdue a particular Monkey Mind distraction: Initial Contact shuts out laziness and fatigue; Sustained Contact subdues doubt; Interest subdues ill-will; 'Joy' overcomes restlessness and worry; and One-Pointed Clarity counters sensual desire. Through Awareness Focusing a scattered and fickle attention clears.

I never realized how my attention focused. I was neglectful and carelessly reacted. Here now I'm having true awareness. I feel how my mind engages. Meditation allows me to better appreciate the present.

February 11—Awareness Focusing as Concentration Continued*

“...a feeling of equanimity, neither pleasure nor pain; an unconcern due to serenity of awareness; singleness of mind, contact, feeling, perception, intention, consciousness, desire, decision, persistence, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention—he ferreted them out one after another.” MN 111

Another useful analogy of Awareness Focusing is to imagine unlocking a door in the dark. Initial Contact is groping to find the door knob, Sustained Contact occurs as a hand is passed over to touch the door knob, Interest is recognizing and keeping a hand on the door knob, ‘Joy’ is the identification bringing out the key with the other hand, and One-Pointed Clarity is used to concentrate and insert the key unlocking the door. Like a mime slowly moving through his routine, the break down as Awareness Focusing serves to show how the mind absorbs on a subject-action.

Bringing the Monkey Mind under control, awareness gathers to what is known as ‘neighborhood concentration’ (access concentration), an unobstructed, unwavering and one-pointed concentration that reveals life and reality without self-complications. The Monkey Mind is controlled, but concentration isn’t deep or long lasting. This is like an infant learning to walk. Focus still has moments of wobbliness and inattention, but awareness slowly becomes sharper and undisturbed. Feel the relief and sense of unburdening that is part of having a clear attention. Realize how self-antics handicap your life.

Now try applying undistracted concentration as an Insight Meditation experience. Sit as you normally would for meditation but in this instance apply the Awareness Focusing technique. The subject most often used during meditation is the breath, but you may choose to focus on anything. Some people follow the movement of the lower abdomen. Also try following the bellows-like effect of the diaphragm and lungs with each breath. There is also the heart if you are able to note its beating and rhythm. Follow how attention concentrates and clears away self-absorbed confusion.

Breathing, Initial Contact can either be the lungs drawing in the breath or feeling the air as it enters through the nostrils; Sustained Contact is the air passing through the nostrils or filling the lungs; Interest is that pause between the in-and-out breath; ‘Joy’ is the engaged awareness for the breath subject-action; and One-Pointed Clarity is

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the attention as receptive and absorbed on the full breath cycle. The self actor and run away Monkey Mind is subdued.

Yet boredom can strike quickly and the Monkey Mind disturbances compromise as a self-induced reaction. Now apply Awareness Focusing to any distracting thought that flares up during meditation. Feel as the thought first comes to mind as an Initial Contacted pressure; Sustained Contact is the thought continuing and becoming stronger; Interest is the thought identified; 'Joy' is engaging in the preoccupying thought; and having One-Pointed Clarity is having the awareness to dismiss or release the thought. Feel the shift from distracted Monkey Mind to Middle Way appreciation and patience.

Awareness Focusing can be applied to any daily activities. While you are sweeping the kitchen, Initial Contact is picking up the broom and holding it in your hands; Sustained Contact is positioning yourself to sweep; Interest is required in the motion of sweeping; 'Joy' is knowingly following the sweeping action; and having One-Pointed Clarity is carrying out the chore as a full awareness for what is taking place.

I can control my mind rather than it jabbering on. I'm no longer as impulsive or distracted. The Monkey Mind isn't dominating me like before.

February 12—Right Questioning and Wise Reflection*

***“From inappropriate attention
you're being chewed by your thoughts.
Relinquishing what's inappropriate,
Contemplate appropriately.” SN 9, 11***

Unrealistic expectations and desires, the self actor seeks out fulfillment—what do I have to do to earn more money...find the woman or man of my dreams...when will I have more of this and less of that. This line of questioning and searching only leads to being anxious and, ultimately, dissatisfaction, unhappiness and being unfulfilled. With no good solution or answer, one is routinely let down.

Having patience, the Middle Way is a reasonable and intuitive Right Questioning and Wise Reflection (or appropriate attention) helping direct life; a mindful appreciation and observance not dominated by greed, hatred or confusion. Right Questioning focuses thoughts as reflecting on life rather than as indulgent and impulsive. Wise Reflection is a common sense approach that reveals that not everything involved in is beneficial or wholesome. There is a recognition for everything thought, said and done. What am I upset and uneasy about? What am I doing that has me bothered? How can I prevent and stop my anger? Misguided and careless, self-engagement is followed rather than wisely coming to terms with present challenges.

Accident prone and mistaken, greed leads to yet greater desire, hatred to further outbursts, and carelessness to continued misguided confusion. Right Questioning and Wise Reflection put life into perspective as a practically applied awareness. It takes a regular and dedicated effort to have a true recognition for life. How and why the Monkey Mind distractions win out is related not only to a lack of concentration but to inappropriate interests. Right Questioning clarifies all the scattered and unnecessary loose ends. Clear recognition for what is useful or a hindrance is known. Wisely Reflecting, discerned is what is valuable and beneficial.

Centered in meditation, feel the gentle release and settling from distractions to a refined and astute mindfulness. Acknowledge Wise Reflection as a directed awareness. Feel how the mind moves away from yearning and searching after to a Middle Way appreciation. A beneficial break from self-absorbed actions, the hourglass-like habitual buildup slowly disperses. Countering the impulsiveness, Wise Reflection directs one as a simple fulfillment. Insight outweighs materialistic

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gains or pleasures. Over-indulging in food, drink or recreational drugs, Wise Reflection supports a less demanding life. Lustful and pursuing, Wise Reflection settles the mind. Meditative calm and concentration come to the forefront. You are either distracted and careless or presently aware and responsible.

Regarding Right Questioning, self-absorbed thoughts are unsettling and a distraction. Feel the restlessness of the stifled breath as well as how the attention flits about. Self-absorbed antics send one reeling. Right Questioning is an intuitive awareness as a recognition of the subconscious. Feel as a self-absorbed attention is fast paced, anxious and deceptive while Right Questioning is aware, intuitive and understanding. One is either careless or presently engaged.

Insight Meditation is a personal experience. Choices become clearer. The ease, caring and peace established through meditation unite as a Middle Way appreciation. Don't be hard on yourself, think negative thoughts or have unreasonable expectations. Feel how the insightful experience actually brightens, opens and brings relief. Acknowledge the shift away from Monkey Mind distractions. Wise Reflection is a straight-forward awareness subduing carelessness self-domination. Right Questioning, Wise Reflection and the Middle Way appreciation are an understanding of life.

I note my impulsiveness. I haven't always been mindful. Now I'm putting my life into perspective. Things don't have to be so demanding or one-sided. I'm grateful for my humble understanding.

February 13—Your Life as Wise Action*

“I am the owner of my actions, heir to my actions, born of my actions, related through my actions, and have my actions as my arbitrator. Whatever I do, for good or for evil, to that will I fall heir’...” AN 5, 57

The Middle Way has three intuitive areas—meditation-concentration and as a basic insight-wisdom realization, and now applied is the third component of conduct-virtue as Wise Action. Five actions (or precepts) transform a careless and impulsive self actor to be conscious, responsible and have Wise Action—life as purposeful action or ethical rather than habit driven. The Five Wise Actions align with one’s motives (karma to be detailed in May). Having goodwill for life and relating to others (in contrast to ill-will or hatred), honest and truthful speech as communication (in contrast to lies, gossiping and frivolous speech), sexual responsibility, abstinence and compassion (in contrast to lust and carnal indulgence), and sobriety (in contrast to alcohol and drug misuse). Not a censorship or a superior-than-thou attitude, the Five Wise Actions reveal the underlying motives driving and underlying responses. Subconscious habitual tendencies are exposed, directly known, engaged and brought under control.

Ten unwise or detrimental actions challenge life. Three are physical: taking life, stealing and sexual misconduct. Four are verbal: lying, slandering, maliciousness and frivolous chatter. Three are mental: coveting, ill-will, and having wrong views. Ten wise or beneficial actions improve life. Three are physical: compassion, generosity, and sexual responsibility. Four are verbal: truthfulness, harmony, politeness, and speaking meaningfully. Three are mental: fulfillment or confidence, goodwill, and right understanding. Reflected are intentions, (karma, the thought before the thought or action) forming your life. Unfortunately, the self actor is impulsively driven. Action in the present implies past action which leads to future action. Present awareness is either careless or wise and leads to suffering or happiness.

Feel the urgent demand of how habits compromise life. A switch isn’t flipped and the stress and problems disappear, but rather known as Wise Reflection are how impulsive actions affect and dominate one both physically and mentally. Having patience and being heedful, Wise Action is a present awareness for what is thought and said as well as actions performed. Without passing judgment, Wise Action is about living a responsible life rather than dominated by compromising habits.

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Settled and centered, clear mindedness discerns one's conduct-virtue as purposeful action.

The Wise Action of Goodwill (not to harm or have ill-will)

“Abandoning the taking of life, abstains from taking life. In doing so, he gives freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings. In giving freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, he gains a share in limitless freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression.” AN 8, 39

Goodwill is respect for others and all life, offering kindness and concern at every moment, situation and encounter. Separating from a self view, one isn't motivated to harm. You share and live in open communication and mutual respect. There can be disagreements, hostility and war or there can be tolerance, understanding and goodwill; battle lines and a winner-take-all attitude vs. thoughtfulness and being a peace maker. The axiom to treat others as you would want to be treated is the Golden Rule.

Like a slap across the face, ill-will is painful. The consequences are the bad feelings and rancor raging, along with enmity and animosity for others. Acknowledge the warning signs—pressure at the forehead and around the temples, eyes squinting, lips clenched, mouth dry, neck veins bulging, a tightness at the chest as breathing becomes tense from the hostility while thoughts painfully narrow. Anger is suffocating and stifling. Take some deep breaths and connect with the present breath quality. Smile, be comfortable and at ease. Relax the one-sided way of looking at things. Acknowledge the crushing pressure of anger and frustration leading to fighting, lashing out, vindictiveness and being put on the defensive.

Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation open to goodwill and also to the role of purposeful action. Here acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing flow of ill-will and self-intentions. Note how you are challenged through an inflexible 'my way' attitude. Settling in concentrated awareness, acknowledge the emergence of patience and beneficial choices rather than aggression, confrontations and unhappy endings. Apply awareness to recognize how ill-will turns to blind rage. Subconscious habitual tendencies exposed, acknowledge the shift to a Middle Way appreciation. As the self-attitude softens, hostility and anger give way to the Wise Action of goodwill.

Apply Awareness Focusing as concentration: feel the Initial Contact of anger like a jabbing prick; Sustained Contact notes the intensifying of anger; Interest as the self actor dominates; 'Joy' is a recognition for the hostile consciousness; and having

One-Pointed Clarity the Wise Action of goodwill is channeled. Feel the change in breath quality and attention as anger is viewed from a Middle Way appreciation. Reflect on how motives play a crucial role in directing thoughts, speech and action. Presently aware, you are is responsible for your actions.

Wisely Reflecting, acknowledge as the self actor wanes. A Middle Way relief and understanding, a personal recognition is established. Feel as the habitual buildup disperses and life is experienced without self-intrusion. Goodwill and mindfulness turn one away from painful consequences to responsible actions.

I've had enough of angry scenes. Let me be respectful, accepting and cooperative rather than hardnosed and temperamental. May I be patient with myself. Life is a lot easier without anger. I connect with goodwill to direct my life.

February 14—The Wise Action of Generosity and Sharing (not to steal or take what isn't yours)*

“Abandoning taking what is not given (stealing), the disciple of the noble ones abstains from taking what is not given. In doing so, he gives freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings. In giving freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, he gains a share in limitless freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression...” AN 8, 39

To be generous is to be open, accepting, concerned and to share. The self actor hordes, is calculating, greedy and attached. Generosity leads to friendship and positive interactions with others, taking you out of a self-centered orbit. It actually feels good to share, be open and caring while greed is selfish, painful and attached.

Connected as a breath quality awareness, acknowledge how greed and selfishness are smothering and suffocating. Follow as the mind is preoccupied and unsettled. Sense how a one-sided self stress and pressure reveals petty indulgences. Note how tension grips the body and how the mind is locked-up in possessiveness and greed. Gently allow the body to relax. The self actor takes a harsh toll. Note how rough the breath is and how the mind narrows. Through meditative awareness follow how greed plunges one into further compromising and aggressive actions.

When stealing there is always the worry of getting caught as well as the guilt that drives a cover up. Taking a postage stamp or making long distant calls from the work place seems of little consequence, pretending that nothing is wrong or will come from these selfish actions. Taking short cuts is a self-deception and has repercussions. Cold and calculating, an ingenuous person with ulterior motives dominates. Others are seen as a threat or as inferior. A taxing burden, greed is repressing. Acknowledge the warning signs of the body tensing and a bitterness sweeping over one. Note how the mind collapses as a self-promoted indulgence.

Not only does one not steal, but there is the willingness to share and offer. Should a homeless person be encountered, do you have the charity to offer a few coins or more? You may not have the means to share, but you can be sympathetic and respectful. There is also the simple act of doing a favor. The motives behind giving and sharing are important. Do you give with reputation in mind and the attention

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garnered? This is a deception. When sincere the other person's needs and situation are a priority. Integrity, honesty and generosity reflect an aware and wise person.

Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation aren't only about generosity but also how purposeful action and motives go on to dominate life. Acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing affects of stinginess. Note how a selfish attitude is harmful. Settling in concentrated awareness, feel the emergence of patience and charity. Aware, recognize the burden of self-centered thoughts, speech and actions. The subconscious exposed, slowly feel the gradual shift towards the Middle Way appreciation. Selfishness gives way to the Wise Actions of generosity and sharing.

Apply Awareness Focusing as concentration: feel the Initial Contact of selfishness as unsettling; Sustained Contact sense selfishness' intensifying grasp; Interest recognizes the self-domination; 'Joy' is a recognition for the selfish consciousness about to take place; and having One-Pointed Clarity the Wise Action of generosity is channeled. Feel the change in breath quality as the mind shifts from being self-absorbed to a centered Middle Way recognition. Reflect on how motives play a crucial role in directing thoughts, speech and actions. Presently Aware, you are responsible for your actions.

Wisely Reflecting, acknowledge as the self actor wanes. A Middle Way relief and understanding, a personal recognition is established. Feel as the habitual buildup disperses and life is experienced without self-intrusion. Generosity turns one away from painful consequences to responsible actions.

Giving, I care for others. I'm actually happier. My reward is the smile returned by the other person. I do what I can without holding back.

February 15—The Wise Action of Compassion (to care and be sexually responsible)*

“Abandoning illicit sex, the disciple of the noble ones abstains from illicit sex. In doing so, he gives freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings. In giving freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, he gains a share in limitless freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression...” AN 8, 39

The self actor is lustful and sexually driven. Compassion is an offering of caring, acceptance and having a natural regard for others and for humanity at large. When encountering sincerity, others come forward to share their goodwill and compassion.

Selfish motives wane when one is aware and takes control of his or her actions. Follow the excited breath quality to slowly release desiring habits. Feel as the habitual domination disperses. A Middle Way appreciation for life without self-intrusion is experienced. Mindfulness and compassion counter lust, longing and compromising actions.

Note the strained anxiety of desire as short and sharp tense breaths while the mind narrows painfully as a sexual fantasy (pressure at the forehead and at the back of the eyes, and the body in a hyper-hormonal state). Recognize how sexual desire keeps one off balance, agitated and wanting. Unable to sleep at night and consumed with lustful thoughts, feel how the mind is caught up in a dizzying carnal deluge. Follow the settling and centering through Insight Meditation as confidence and patience come forward.

Not a censorship, the Wise Action of compassion is a call for responsibility. Often sexual intimacy is a cover-up for old wounds, but now the other person is seen as a friend and not a carnal object. Aware and patient, a caring attention and compassion emerge. Friendship and goodwill are a benefit. Caring and compassion are a Wise Action while passion and desire are a frustrated pursuit.

Sexual misconduct brings pain and ruin to individuals, families, and even harms innocent children. Yet it is all done in the name of ‘love.’ Reflect on how motives play a key role in directing your life. Rather than being indulgent and consumed by

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sexual energy, there is the Wise Action of compassion. One can care deeply while not feeling lust and looking at the other person as a carnal object.

Feel how arousing and distracting sexual craving is. Stoked by an insatiable passion, lust is all consuming. Ulterior motives dominate. Abuse, loneliness, and misunderstanding coupled with the sex drive compromise are alienating. Born from sex, you are also more than just reckless passion. Sex is short-lived while compassion requires a deeper caring, genuine concern and sincerity. Being honest, acknowledge what is prompting desire (often it is a troubled upbringing and personal issues).

Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation reveal compassion but also how purposeful action as motives go on to dominate life. Acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing affects of lust. Settled in concentrated awareness, feel the emergence of patience and caring rather than desire. Aware, recognize the burden of self-centered thoughts, speech and actions. The subconscious exposed, slowly feel the gradual shift towards a Middle Way appreciation. Carnal impulses give way to the Wise Action of compassion.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: feel the Initial Contact of lust as unsettling; Sustained Contact notes the intensification of lust; Interest regards how one is overwhelmed; 'Joy' follows the passion but also catches one's self; and having One-Pointed Clarity the Wise Action of compassion is channeled. Feel the change in breath quality as the mind shifts from a lustful state to a centered, Middle Way recognition. Reflect on how motives play a crucial role in directing thoughts, speech and actions. To refocus your passion, it is helpful to view a younger person as one's own child, people of the same age as a brother or sister, and older people as a mother, father or grandparent. Presently aware, you are responsible for your actions.

Wisely Reflecting, acknowledge as the self actor wanes. A Middle Way relief and understanding, a personal recognition is established. Feel as the habitual buildup disperses and life is experienced without self-intrusion. Compassion turns one from painful consequences to responsible actions.

Sexually charged, I'm blinded by the excitement and fall into compromising mischief. I can be sincere and caring rather than going after a pretty face and all the meaningless game-playing involved. I can be myself, natural and friendly, without having to impress anyone. Caring and compassion come first!

February 16—The Wise Action of Truthfulness (not to lie but be sincere in your speech and communication)*

“Abandoning lying, the disciple of the noble ones abstains from lying. In doing so, he gives freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings. In giving freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, he gains a share in limitless freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression...” AN 8, 39

Words can injure, create misunderstanding, mistrust and escalate to animosity. Criticism is like jabbing the other person with a stick. Expressing an opinion at every moment no matter how honest only leads to struggles, stress, one-upmanship, and reflects a personal insecurity. Speaking unkindly puts one in a state of aggression and distances one from others. Confused, agitated and worried, lying and straying from the truth, leaving one off balance and restless. Plagued by doubts, more lies are fabricated. Even innocent ‘white lies’ are misleading. Half the truth is nevertheless a lie. Instead of name calling, finger pointing or blaming, wise speech emphasizes awareness, responsibility and honesty before impulsively blurting out thoughts and opinions.

Acknowledge the benefits of courteous and truthful speech. Like an antidote, just words are healing, beneficial and soothing to others. The body settles down and the mind is open, calm and clear. Through sincere speech, friendship and trust emerge.

Lies, gossip, exaggeration, and foul language are disturbing. Note how breathing becomes difficult and the mind reels when harsh speech is used. The body sickens and the mind sours from the negative dialogue. When insincere, exaggerating, gossiping or lying, note how the mind is confused and disconnected from the present. There is the urge to cover-up, manipulate and self-aggrandize.

One shouldn’t be so serious that a laugh or light-hearted moment can’t be shared, but when humor goes on to exaggerate or single out someone for foibles that everyone has, then speech takes on a wounding, nasty tone. Even as a gentle chiding, there is always a ‘victim’ to humor. Words should be measured, fit the situation and be directed to the level of the other person’s understanding and never be divisive.

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Wise speech also includes ‘noble silence.’ If there is nothing appropriate to communicate, share your quiet and peaceful presence. This includes not taking part in frivolous conversations and gossip. Listening patiently is an important part of communication. There are times when being a good listener and a friend to the other person is best. Reflect on how motives play a key role in directing life. Applying Wise Speech, accept responsibility for one’s actions.

Gossip goes on to relay something you don’t have first-hand knowledge or experience about. Rumors are the equivalent of poisoning. Speech and words should be an honest expression, tactful and sincere. Wise Speech promotes trust and goodwill. When honest, like minded friends come forward; when dishonest insincere and untrustworthy people swarm like vultures. Before ever speaking a word, the thought as intention for what is wished to be spoken must first come to mind.

Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation reveal honesty but also how motives as purposeful action go on to dominate life. Acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing affects of careless speech. Settled in concentrated awareness, feel the emergence of patience and beneficial choices rather than dishonesty. Recognize the burden of self-centered thoughts, speech and actions. The subconscious exposed, slowly feel the gradual shift towards a Middle Way appreciation. Careless speech gives way to the Wise Action of Truthfulness.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: feel the Initial Contact of careless and impulsive speech; Sustained Contact is the intensifying of negative thoughts forming; Interest as the self actor exaggerates to invent and twist things around; ‘Joy’ is a recognition for one’s speech before actually speaking; and having One-Pointed Clarity the wise action of honesty is channeled. Feel the change in breath quality as the mind shifts to a Middle Way recognition. Reflect on how motives play a crucial role in directing thoughts, speech and action. Presently aware, you are responsible for your actions.

Wisely Reflecting, acknowledge as the self actor wanes. A Middle Way relief and understanding, a personal recognition is established. Feel as the habitual buildup disperses and life is experienced without self-intrusion. Truthfulness turns you away from painful consequences to responsible actions.

I’ve been careless in my speech and regret things I’ve said. I’ll make the effort to speak appropriately. I’ll stop gossiping and curb my tongue. I wouldn’t want to be spoken about badly and treat others the same—respectfully and honestly. I feel how frivolous conversations keep me unsettled. I must be more responsible.

February 17—The Wise Action of Moderation and Sobriety (responsibility for drug and alcohol consumption)*

“Abandoning the use of intoxicants, the disciple of the noble ones abstains from taking intoxicants. In doing so, he gives freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings. In giving freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, he gains a share in limitless freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression...” AN 8, 39

Unable to function, thoughts blurred, speech slurred, and body chemistry a wreck, the consequences of drug and alcohol use are obvious. There is no sense of moderation or perspective. Social drinking and casual drug use are an excuse not to deal firsthand with problems. Drug addiction, wild parties and drunken weekends make life more difficult and challenging. Carelessness through drugs or alcohol use goes on to dull awareness and bring harm to family members and friends. The rush of a drug high is never worth the after effects of being out of control and the sickening time spent hung over and wasted.

Centered and aware, body calm and mind clear, acknowledge the insecurity, fear, and doubt provoking you to react and escape through drugs in order to try and cope with life's demands, let downs and difficulties. Acknowledge the physical tension (facial muscles and torso) as well as how the mind is strained and breathing closer to hyperventilation. Settling down, be patient. Meditation is an intuitive experience bringing a wholesome perspective for life and pointing you in the right direction. Note how personal doubts and insecurity cloud the mind. There is a wounded child who needs compassion and healing. There must be forgiveness. Yes, you were wronged but now you need closure. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way are a true benefit and revelation. The Five Wise Actions applied. Feel how deep seated habits are stifling and a suffering. Through a Middle Way appreciation relax and gradually release haunting torments. Slowly the self-obsessed burden is released.

Wise Action isn't a censorship, but leads to a happy, less suffering life. Confidence and understanding are strengthened by mindfulness and responsibility. The 'natural high' of the present moment and Middle Way appreciation is an understanding and have Wise Action for life.

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Acknowledge insecurities. Have sympathy and be patient. Know goodwill. Turn away from recklessness and indulgence to sanity and personal insight. Now, with meditation's settling and poise as concentration, a Wise Reflection stands out. A personal appreciation, feel how the self actor is slowly defused.

But what do you do if you slip back and are unwise or careless? Is it the end of the world? Are you condemned? Not at all. Learn from your miscues and actions. You tried something and it didn't work. There is also awareness and understanding. Slowly confidence is gained and personal intuition is embraced. Never again to be carelessly involved, one is absolved. Meditation is insightful and wise action is applied.

Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation connect one with sobriety and the role of purposeful action. Here acknowledge dormant, active and transgressing habitual impulses for drug and alcohol consumption. Addictions are harmful. Settling in concentrated awareness, acknowledge the emergence of patience, beneficial choices and options rather than over indulging on stimulants. Now mindful, realized is how drug use is stupefying. Subconscious habit tendencies exposed, follow the shift to a Middle Way appreciation. As self attachments disperse, the urge to drink or smoke gives way to the Wise Actions of moderation and sobriety.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: feel the Initial Contact of craving and insecurity arising; Sustained Contact is the intensifying of the craving and insecurity; Interest as the self actor begins to dominate; 'Joy' as a recognition of craving to indulge but also catch one's self; and having One-Pointed Clarity the Wise Action of moderation and sobriety are channeled. Feel the change in breath quality as the mind shifts from careless indulgences to a Middle Way recognition. Reflect on how motives play a crucial role in directing thoughts, speech and actions. Presently aware, you are responsible for your actions.

Wisely Reflecting, acknowledge as the self actor wanes. A Middle Way relief and understanding, a personal recognition is established. Feel as the habitual buildup disperses and life is experienced without self-intrusion. Sobriety and mindfulness turn you away from painful consequences to responsible actions.

I had a troubled youth and experimented as a teenager. But that's all in the past. I understand myself. I've matured to take control of my life. Without drugs and alcohol, my life is meaningful. I've the patience and recognition to act wisely.

February 18—Renunciation and Restraint*

“Having seen the drawback of sensual pleasures, I pursued that theme; having understood the reward of renunciation, I familiarized myself with it. My heart leaped up at renunciation, grew confident, steadfast, and firm, seeing it as peace. Then, quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskillful qualities, I entered and remained in meditative concentration.” AN 9, 41

Unnecessary experiences and involvements are a distraction. Of course, family is first, but getting caught up in materialistic needs, over spending and a workaholic run around has people crying out for a sane outlet. Committed and aware, honestly reflect on life. Meditation brings one to renunciation and restraint.

Renunciation and restraint are strong words. One imagines seclusion and penance. These practices help, but have their limitations. Renunciation is the awareness to simply stop harmful and negative habits actions from taking place by first not getting carried away. Desire associated with the sense contacts are controlled (eyes/forms, ears/sounds, mouth/taste, nose/smells, touch/tactile and mind/thoughts). Wise Reflection is cultivated as insight for one’s life. Restraint is responsibility for one’s actions and to be discerning and controlled.

You can’t have it both ways, one foot in awareness and the other straddling in careless habits. You either are unwise or wise, careless or responsible. The foot that rests in habitual quicksand will always slip and bring one down. Look at it as dropping self-indulgent and aggressive ways while being awareness, having goodwill and insight. Not everything is good or right for you. Right Questioning, Wise Reflection and Awareness Focusing as concentration are a Middle Way approach. Simplicity, clarity, ease and well-being are known and engaged.

Prioritizing, renunciation and restraint are a deepened awareness for caring, generosity, and patience. You are aware, listen carefully and relate better to others. It all comes down to personal choices and responsibility—to Wise Action. You don’t go around rolling your eyes in disapproval, frowning or spouting platitudes at every turn. There is a ‘right time’ when to candidly talk, but only if the other person is willing and truly interested. Apart from this you have to live life and peacefully deal with your surroundings. Be responsible for your life and actions as should the other person be.

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People make excuses for not committing themselves while others give less than a full effort. Many people lead lives of leisure and luxury. Through a mindful and responsible personal insight, a basic simplicity is followed. Some sacrifice and determination are required for everything. For example, going to night school requires giving up some social activities and putting in the time for studying, writing papers and preparing for exams. You can't have and do everything because you end up exhausted and confused.

Follow how actions are sparked by one's motives. A moment is frustrating, a busy situation has one reeling, and yet another moment is confusing. Caught up in self role playing, actions have far reaching consequences beyond the present. Reflect on and realize how habits are compromising. Together Insight Meditation and the Middle Way illuminate life.

Stronger and more intense than the Monkey Mind distraction and the casual break down in concentration, the Three Poisons (greed, hatred and confusion) are chronic weaknesses. The Three Poisons are careless, impulsive, and relate to suffering. Surfacing as stress-filled impulses, greed is a frenzied temptation, hatred boiling aggression, and confusion a dizzying uncertainty for life.

A volcano analogy helps reveal how motives affect life—dormant, active and transgressing.

Dormant—Habit potentials persist as latent or deep-seated. The dormant stage is deceptive as greed, hatred and confusion aren't controlled and can erupt at anytime to wreck havoc. This is the subconscious level which Insight Meditation and Wise Action expose and penetrate. More than careless and impulsive, life is discerned through a Middle Way appreciation which isn't critical or judgmental.

Active—Greed, hatred or confusion surface as choices and potentials. The habitual volcano steams and vents at this point. The Three Poisons make themselves known though aren't yet acted out. Aware of the moment, renunciation and restraint are applied.

Transgressing—Here the self actor reacts automatically and the resulting consequences spill over as an erupting upheaval of greed, hatred and confusion. Suffering, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair are the result.

Follow greed's gripping tension as excitement and an unsettling pursuit. Note how desire restricts and affects breathing (facial muscles taut, jaw clenched and the strain over the eyelids and around the eyes while abdominal and pelvic muscles tense up). Feel the distracting upheaval. Acknowledge the stressful buildup but also

the relaxing and dispersing of desire through a Middle Way discernment and relevance without self-intrusion.

Hatred is like a turbulent storm—frustrating, angry and outraged. Feel how the hateful turmoil affects the body. The heart pounds, head throbs, and breathing is labored, blood pressure up and adrenaline is overwhelming. Centered and aware, note how hatred is overwhelming. Relax, feel how self-reactions, habits, behavior, and distractions surge forward. Acknowledge the extremes of indignation, dislike and aggression. Body relaxed and mind settling, as a Middle Way relevance without self-intrusion, allow the self actor impulses to disperse and anger to dissipate.

Confused, doubting, uncertain, restless and misunderstanding, the mind is nervous and flip-flops uneasily. Sense the body and the more obvious signs of heart racing, muscles twitching, facial tension, and lips dry while hands fidget and feet tap nervously. Allow the accumulated stress to disperse. Recognize life without self-intrusion.

As a directed awareness and settled attention, renunciation and restraint are a simpler, honest and responsible way to live. Connect with the present body (and breath), feelings, mind and life-action experiences as a centered recognition.

I thought life just happened, but there is more going on behind the scenes. I'm seeing how my motives and habits affect me. Everything starts with my mind.

February 19—The Worldly Ways*

(Gain and Loss, Fame and Dishonor, Praise and Blame, Happiness and Pain)

“That restraint that riddance of desire and passion in the world—that is the freedom from the world.” AN 1

Arising and fading, events and experiences move in cycles and patterns as purposeful actions. One minute you can be on top of the world and then the next you are making your way out of a rut. There are four corresponding, linked actions (vicissitudes): gain/loss; fame/dishonor; praise/blame; happiness/pain affecting everyone. Life is played out on the worldly, self-centered stage. Motives as driving impulsive actions account for life’s ups and downs.

The lives of celebrities are a good example—indulging until they are over indulged, their drug and alcohol abuse leads to rehabilitation stints. When their money runs out and the party is over, they find themselves cold, sober and alone. Actually, they should be commended for their real life struggles and the lessons they provide. May their lives be improved and may they know peace. You might get what you want, but at a price—and remember, it won’t last!

Fulfillment and wisdom come down to being happy and secure with who you are and what you have. There is a simple life creed: food, clothing, shelter, medicine—having everything needed, let the riches come from one’s good intentions. Most people have basic security and comfortable lives, an education, a job, and sufficient means as well as being loved by family and friends. But remember life’s unsettling nature. The classic example of a rose mirrors life. The rose emerges from a bud as you do from the womb. The flower slowly blossoms and changes. You live and are challenged. The rose blooms then wilts. You age and die. There is one difference between the rose and the human condition—you have wisdom. There are choices, free will, responsibility, understanding, and making better decisions to direct life.

Aware of subconscious motives, sense the pressure to fulfill a self-image. Greedily seeking, trying to please and be accepted, fulfillment is impossible. Feel the exhaustion that is the worldly way tug of war. Note the stressful communication between the body and mind as habit energies arise to complicate life. As a present appreciation, one is aware of self-indulgent behavior.

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Gain and Loss

Gain is tinged with self-centered pride, conceit and arrogance. You may think you are in control, powerful and have all the answers, but this is short-lived. Money, status, position and power are deceptive (ironically one is being controlled by a self-illusion!). On the flip side, loss is frustrating, fearful or devastating. Again, self-attachment is the source of suffering and problems as things are done with the intention to gain control.

Not only is there gain and loss of material possessions, but there are also trying emotional and personal losses. Closer to Humpty Dumpty repeatedly falling and being put back together again, a self-image is a delusion. Normally, it isn't until aged and having slowed down that one is jolted to the fact that you aren't going to live forever. The body no longer responds and weakens while mental capacities slow. Not able to do half the things of your youth, one makes-up for youthful exuberance through awareness, having goodwill, Wise Reflection, and being responsible.

There is no covering up or deception. Putting things into perspective, the Middle Way appreciation allows for understanding to help better cope with life's challenges. Adversity is met with patience and clear-minded Wise Action. Renunciation and restraint as Wise Actions directs one from over the top upset. Applying Wise Action, realized is how subconscious habit tendencies and motives underscore life.

Fame and Dishonor

Who wouldn't like to be the toast of the town, cheered, recognized and sought after? But again fame feeds a self-illusion and what inevitably follows is a downfall. Unable to make everyone happy and be all things to all people, someone is always going to feel slighted and upset. A backlash is guaranteed. The President as leader or any parent both know about making unpopular decisions. When generous and sharing as a Wise Action, kindness is usually returned, but one doesn't have any expectations or illusion of needing such benevolence. As an insightful and wise person you aren't swayed by praise or off handed remarks. If in the end you are the only one who knows the truth and are content for having lived honestly, so be it. Applying the Wise Action of truthfulness, realized are the motives driving one's actions.

Fame is seductive and alluring and corresponds to greed while dishonor is an assault and lack of respect. Wise Action and the intentions behind the actions shape life. Everything thought, said and done has a purpose—self-promoted or wisely understood. Acknowledge the shift away from careless, impulsive actions to awareness and responsibility. Feel as the hourglass-like brims with stress and fame's unsettling pursuit. The bubble bursts when insulted or ignored. Follow how a

negative reaction narrows to reveal how as a self actor one is subconsciously affected. Played out are dormant, active and transgressing habits.

Relax and ease into the meditation, disengaging from worldly pursuits and preoccupations. Acknowledge the breath's quality—is there tension and shortness of breath? The body, feelings, mind and life-actions are a grounded realization. Apply Awareness Focusing as concentration to help clarify the moment. Feel as self-accumulated habits begin to disperse.

Gain fills one with short-lived joy and gratifies a self-image, then just as quickly the moment and events change. There are degrees of loss, from outright pain to feeling sad or depressed. Be aware of the physical sensations as well as the feelings stirred. Release the moment through a Middle Way appreciation. Know the clarification from carelessness to Wise Action. What is your intention? Are habits leading you astray? Apply renunciation and restraint. Self is an extreme challenge, but through Insight Meditation and Wisely Reflecting, realized is what is beneficial and wholesome. Recognize how Monkey Mind distractions affect and carelessly lead one on. Whatever the situation, moment or encounter, be patient and determined. Wisely Reflecting, thoughts, speech, and actions align to reflect responsibility and understanding.

As I slow down, all my antics become clear to me. Engaging in Wise Action, I know patience, happiness and am settled. Sometimes I drive myself too hard.

February 20—Worldly Ways Continued* (Praise and Blame, Happiness and Pain)

“When beings have fully come to know as it really is, the satisfaction in the world as such, the misery in the world as such, the freedom from the world as such, then they dwell free, detached, released from, with heart unconfined by the world...” AN 1

Praise and Blame

If politicians in general weren't corrupt one would do well to follow their examples of resiliency for praise or blame. But more realistically, praise is ego inflating while blame crushes one's personal image; praise is soothing and welcomed while blame is an attack and avoided. People and situations that are well received and admired are comfortable while negative feedback and challenges are avoided. The self actor antics are subtle and deceptive.

But how is criticism and blame handled without feeling the need to fight back and avenge an insult? It is self who feels attacked and needs to be comforted. Praise and blame change like the weather. One moment admired and glorified, the next one is hated and scorned. All you can do is endure and accept the situation as it is. This is a challenging lesson. The Wise Action of compassion along with goodwill reaffirms awareness and understanding. Wisely Reflecting, the intentions and subconscious motives shaping life stand out. Speak truthfully and behave politely through Wise Speech.

Happiness and Pain

The short-term happiness of creature comforts seduces the ego and is gratifying. But there are always setbacks and disappointments. Acting on greed, hatred and confusion, the Three Poisons are at the center of carelessness.

In daily exchanges and encounters the pendulum swings from gratifying, indulgent and fulfilled to difficult, disarming and disillusioned. Happiness as well as pain is short-lived. Closer to being a child, people are prone to fits and tantrums when not getting their way.

Like riding a cresting wave peaking then crashing, you get swept up, carried away and then tossed. Handling and coping with life's ups and downs is aided by the Five Wise Actions. There is self-disappointment, anger, fear and confusion as

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expectations are clung to, but having Wise Action entails a connected present appreciation as motives arise. This is neither a pessimistic nor a fatalistic view, but an honest recognition for life's ups and downs. Can one be 'happy' irregardless of the situation, circumstance or encounter? Patience, Wise Reflection, Wise Action along with renunciation and restraint bring a much needed balance to life.

Smothered by the backlash, follow as the breath's quality goes from the extremes of joy to sorrow. Overwhelmed and charged as a self actor, life is challenged and seems unrewarding. Centering on the breath, distinguish self-originated physical tension and mental frustrations. Acknowledge the interaction between the body and mind. Gently relax the one-sided, self-centered reactions. Allow the habitual buildup and associated stress to disperse.

Slowly realize the role of motives. The subconscious revealed, Wise Action is then followed. Wisely Reflecting, Insight Meditation and the Middle Way reveal and discern life. There is more to life than careless, self-limitations. Whatever the situation, moment or encounter be patient, fearless and unwavering. Your thoughts, speech, and actions reflect responsibility and understanding.

I have to be more flexible. Nothing is set, certain or guaranteed. There are always surprises around the corner. I don't have to fall apart or be dramatic. There also is Wise Action.

February 21—Awareness as Protection*

“I will protect myself establishing awareness and practicing awareness; by practicing patience, harmlessness, loving kindness and sympathy...I protect others.” SN 5, 47 (19, 9)

You best serve yourself by being aware, patient and responsible. When the Monkey Mind distractions dominate or the Three Poisons are overwhelming, Wise Reflection turns one away from habitual responses and suffering consequences. Awareness and patience stand out.

The body (breath), feelings, mind and life-actions are a present consideration. From these telling instances quickly recognize stress (facial tension, abdominal pressures as well as mental states). A few deep breaths help one settle down. A smile breaks up any hostile or angry feelings.

Centered through a body scan, acknowledge the breath’s quality. Note the body, feelings, mind and life-actions for stress and tension. Sense the habitual buildup absorbing you. Slowly relax. Acknowledge the release and dispersing. As a Middle Way appreciation one doesn’t indulge in or is combative, but Wise Reflecting allows the stress to release. Acknowledge the relief and well being as self-intrusion falls away.

Interacting with others, share goodwill, sympathize and be caring. Even when provoked, one is patient. One best serves the situation by being a peacemaker. As the upset person vents his or her frustration, they exhaust themselves and settle down. But in a worst case situation, speak firmly but politely. Bullying and ultimatums aren’t accepted. Also remember Noble Silence. Not arguing with the other person is best. There is already too much anger in the world. It doesn’t help to fan the flames of hostility or ill will.

Someone one has to blink first. This isn’t giving in or cowardice. There is no loss of pride or status, but goodwill best serves both parties. A true reflection and measure of meditation is how adversity is handled.

I’m not as defensive as I used to be. It suddenly seems childish. I’m moving past all the game playing. I don’t have to have the last word or prove anything. Even if it’s only me, the situation is made better.

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Life Practice

February 22—The Middle Way Crossroads*

The busier one is, the more unsettled and impulsive one becomes. Insight Meditation is calming while Right Questioning, Wise Reflection, and renunciation and restraint help clarify life. Wise Action reveals the underlying role of subconscious intentions. Only by being practically present and aware can one be helpful. Trying to juggle too much you become scatter-brained and the Monkey Mind distractions are an adverse affect. The worldly ways are like running on a non-stop tread mill, leaving you exhausted and confused. As incidents trigger greed, hatred and confusion, feel how the mind narrows and becomes impaired. As an Insight Meditation experience and Middle Way appreciation, patience directs actions.

Breathe deeply to connect with the breath's quality (and body), feelings, mind and life-actions. Slowly release the affecting accumulated habits. What's the hurry or bother? Take control of the Monkey Mind. The Middle Way as conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom appreciation, direct one away from the extremes of indulgence and aggression to an intuitive awareness for life without self-domination.

Nervous chatter, over eating, impulsive shopping, drinking too much, or chain smoking, these indulgences start out innocently as the result of boredom, but have long lasting results. Compromising, they lead to Monkey Mind desire, ill-will, laziness, restlessness and doubt.

Underlying subconscious habits (the thought before the thought or action) charge one. Through the simple recognition of the breath's quality, feelings, mind and life-actions, life is appreciated. The Middle Way is about being sensitive, caring and connected. Not cruel or punishing, there is no judging, name-calling or finding fault. Knowing weaknesses, responsibility is taken. The self-absorbed approach has one seeking after impossible expectations that are exhausting and dissatisfying.

Life is about actions which are the result and consequence of motivated impulses. For example, handing over an article to someone, one could abruptly push it or gently hand it over. Answering the telephone one can be curt or sincerely greet the caller. Driving one can cut off other cars, sound the car horn for added emphasis, or

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allow the other car to pass. You can be selfish or share with others. You can burst in and rush by, or calmly enter and greet people.

Renunciation and restraint aren't a compromise, but rather a reflection for how you live. Eliminated are careless, negative and detrimental habits. Beneficial, wholesome and a Wise Reflection are followed. Aware of thoughts, speech and actions and developing consequences, renounced are problematic, self-directed habits while developing and reaffirming awareness, concentration, goodwill and insight through a Middle Way approach and Wise Action.

Be honest. Don't fall victim to the Monkey Mind distractions or the Three Poisons habitual reactions. Meditation, Right Questioning, Wise Reflection, Awareness Focusing as concentration, renunciation and restraint and Wise Action are an insight experience.

I now trust my meditation and insightful experiences. I see the difference when I'm aware. I can be patient as well as compassionate. I am understanding my life.

February 23—Wise Action as Clarity in Your Life *

The Five Wise Actions reveal how motives shape life. One can be careless and habitually driven or aware, controlled and wise. You find yourself where you are because impulsive motives and intentions have brought you here.

Not harming or having ill-will, respect, caring, and a good nature come forward. Not greedy, one is generous. Responsible in sexual conduct, one is compassionate. Sober one isn't reckless from intoxicants but is clear-minded and has responsible actions. Not stealing or stingy, one is generous. No longer careless in speech, one is truthful and pleasant in communication. Ill-will is curbed by goodwill.

Boredom starts the slide into Monkey Mind distractions then leads to the Three Poisons' habitual behavior. Wisely Reflection, renunciation, restraint and Wise Action go hand-in-hand. Calm, steady, open, patient, settled and good natured, awareness for your thoughts and feelings, life is better engaged. The Middle Way is a threefold practice of conduct-virtue (controlling transgressing habits), meditation-concentration (controlling active arisen thoughts) and insight-wisdom (eradicating dormant habits at the root).

The greatest challenge comes from the Three Poisons. As Insight Meditation exposes subconscious tendencies, each person deals with his or her own weaknesses and challenges. Intentions lead to self-promoted actions: desire is an unsettling run around, hatred as anger or aversion is upsetting, while confusion and doubt are a bewildering insecurity.

Previously the self actor dominated and won out, but now a Middle Way approach helps slowly transform careless habits and reactions. Feel not only the well being but also the clarity that Wise Action as a responsible conduct and principled action have. Realized is the deeper intent and direction of one's motives.

I'm grateful to be settled and have understanding. I can't believe the turn around in my life. Before I was a day dreamer and impulsive. I'm much happier realizing and connected to what I'm doing. My life is manageable now that I'm aware.

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February 24—The Fickle Mind*

Realize how fickle the mind and attention are. Observe yourself and recognize how the Monkey Mind springs up. Stressed or anxious, is the Whining Mind dominating? Are responsibilities and multi-tasking confusing, the Quicksand Mind coming out? Does the Black Cloud Mind make situations more challenging than they actually are? Identifying and knowing these mental states and others is crucial to overcoming the Monkey Mind distractions. Insight Meditation is a personal understanding of life. More than haphazard, being impulsive and careless—realize present intentions. Monitor the breath's quality, body, feelings, mind as well as life-actions. Gradually awareness strengthens and is discerning. Acknowledge how the Monkey Mind first flares up as boredom. Applying Right Questioning and Wise Reflection along with renunciation and restraint are the brakes to controlling habitual charged energies. The Five Wise Actions are a responsible outlet and expression.

Acknowledge how greed, hatred or confusion impact one. Why am I acting this way? Why am I thinking these thoughts? Where are my motives leading me? What have I gotten myself involved in? Take responsibility for what you think, say and do as a choice between careless intentions and Wise Action. Recognize the urgent pressure motives exert (or the thought before the thought or action). If you are simply walking, be aware while walking. At work, driving, doing chores or if alone be aware. Know the present moment and the underlying mental monologue.

Apply Awareness Focusing as concentration (Initial Contact, Sustained Contact, Interest, 'Joy' and One-Pointed Clarity). Acknowledge how the mind focuses. Wisely Reflecting, see into the intentions driving impulsive habits. Note how the mind works and concentrates. Acknowledge what it is like to disengage from a self-bewilderment to a clear-minded realization. Connected as a Middle Way appreciation, distractions settle and attention centers to a One-Pointed Clarity (moving away from the self-extremes for indulgence/gratification and hostility/aggression). Note the tranquil, quiet joy that comes from controlling and subduing the Monkey Mind. Breath quality, body, feelings, mind and life-actions are personally revealing. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way are an intuitive recognition, healing as well as transformation.

Long standing problems with a specific Monkey Mind distraction, make the extra effort to be aware how the body and mind are affected. Note the boredom, resistance and carelessness and towards certain situations or people. Multi-tasking

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may occur at the work place, but it is counter productive in one's personal life and meditative experience. Be in the 'one' present moment of thoughts, speech or actions. The Three Poisons (greed, hatred and confusion) are curtailed through Wise Reflection and Wise Action. Be patient and understanding. There is a choice between careless and wise actions.

I feel as though I've stepped off a dizzying merry-go-round to now calmly look at my life. I see how I've been careless and impulsive. Now I'm aware of what I think, speak and do. I'm patient and understanding.

February 25—Direct and Clear Awareness*

Awareness is a presently grounded recognition and connection for life—thoughts, speech and actions. When the mind is unsettled and wandering, apply Direct Awareness and reestablish mindfulness. Clear Awareness is the recognition that one is settled and the mind is an open and discerning consciousness.

The breath reveals the present. Note the tense, short breaths as Monkey Mind distractions get the better of you. Pressure extends down over the body (facial muscles taut, shoulders arched up, along with abdominal and pelvic strain). Direct Attention identifies a mental state as desiring, hateful, lazy, restless or doubting. Acknowledge the moment, connecting with the breath and recognizing the unsettling. Feeling how the body/mind communicate and stress is experienced.

Without judging, direct your attention. Sense the Monkey Mind agitation and how the body and mind are impacted. Applying Direct Awareness, slowly feel the shift from habitual confusion to a Middle Way appreciation. Note how the tension and stress arise and fade. The habitual buildup begins to disperse. As mindfulness is reestablished, a deep sigh of relief is exhaled. Acknowledge how distractions, fantasies and habits are subdued.

Settled and better skilled, Awareness Focusing as concentration becomes more natural and easier. Initial Contact connects as a present breath awareness; Sustained Contact identifies the distracted moment; Interest acknowledges the qualities of stress and tension; ‘Joy’ stands out as you catch yourself to direct the mind; and having One-Pointed Clarity establishes Direct Awareness for the present without self intrusion.

Clear Awareness is recognizing the present moment as settled, calm, focused and aware. Self-impulsiveness is abated. Renunciation and restraint stand out when detached from sense-impressions and reactions are disengaged.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact notes the settled breath quality; Sustained Contact recognizes Clear Awareness; Interest distinguishes the calm focus; ‘Joy’ experiences the tranquil breath; and having One-Pointed Clarity is an undisturbed abiding awareness. Acknowledge the absence of careless habits and the Monkey Mind distractions. A refined and settled Middle Way appreciation is followed.

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I connect with the present. Direct Awareness brings me back out from the Monkey Mind distractions. Through Clear Awareness I remain focused. I'm better established and aware.

February 26—Wise Action in Practice *

Are the Five Wise Actions practical and helpful in today's world?

What do I do when bugs invade my house? Is it all right to eat meat? If I find something and keep it, is that considered stealing? It is good to ask questions and realize the implications of Wise Action.

Is it necessary to panic to discover a trail of ants in the house? There are perimeter chinks and natural not toxic remedies that can be used on unwanted visitors. If mice have entered the pantry, place the food in plastic containers or get traps which capture the mice to be released later in a field. The mice are only trying to survive. Allow yourself to share in this world with its many beings and creatures. Tight fitting screens and better insulation around doorways and windows will keep away unwanted pests. Capture a spider in a cup and set it free outside. Be open minded and tolerant.

Irregardless, if you are a vegetarian or meat eater, one can follow the awareness known through Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation. But for variety, try substituting non-meat dishes a few times a week in place of fish or meat. Get to know vegetables, tofu, beans, grains and legumes. Your palette will find these vegetarian offerings every bit as tasty and filling as well as your cholesterol level dropping and blood pressure stabilizing. Eating dairy products is fine, but realize the suffering done to a slaughtered animal. Could you bring yourself to butcher an animal? This is sobering. Treat others (including animals) as you would want to be treated.

If attacked, first try talking and reasoning. But if forced to defend yourself, can the person be disarmed? The intention isn't to harm or kill, but one of self-defense. There is a big difference between cold-blooded murder and self-defense.

Should something be found, make an attempt to first find the rightful owner. There is nothing wrong with keeping something found, but also remember to be generous. There are many others with less means.

Respect your physical and mental well being. Recognize how indulgences dominate. It might seem that recreational drug use is inconsequential, but realize how much better you would be not indulging? Fear, rejection and low self-esteem

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are covered up by intoxicating habits. It is one thing, for example, for a terminally ill patient to use medication, but it is another to unnecessarily dull thoughts, speech, senses and actions through drug use. What about society in general? Obese, fast-food consuming, drug indulgent, alcohol consuming, obsessed with violence and pornography—where are we headed as a people and a planet? Anything over-indulged in and abused whether it be food, drugs, alcohol or video is harmful.

Applying Wise Action, try focusing on a ‘theme’ for the week. One week stress goodwill; another week be gracious in speech while making an effort to truly listen to others. But don’t be self-righteous with a superior-than-thou attitude that puts others off. Wise Action is a personal realization and a happiness, not a criticism or judgment. Don’t expect people to be other than who they are, nor should you be upset with situations when they aren’t ‘right.’ In the end each person is responsible for their actions. You have direct awareness for life (body, feelings, mind and life-actions) while living by the Five Wise Actions. In dealings and communicating with others, be patient and have goodwill. Share, be truthful and compassionate.

The Five Wise Actions direct one away from self-compromised conflicts and hostility, and towards an insightful and less suffering life. This is the real life benefit and reward of Insight Meditation and the Middle Way—to live responsibly, to be at peace and to be wisely and humbly fulfilled. As Wise Action is applied, the underlying motives behind one’s actions become clear. Trouble sleeping, nervous, impatient, quick tempered, indecisive, on edge, or are you confused and frightened? Careless intent weighs heavily. Living a mindful life, Wise Action promotes confidence, responsibility and understanding. The Five Wise Actions are a practically applied awareness. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way are tied to the real world and not just so many empty words. The benefits and virtue of the Middle Way are far reaching.

My motives standout. I’ve lived life as though on a one way street. I didn’t know other options were possible. The Five Wise Actions have opened me to a deeper appreciation of my life and for others.

February 27—Content and Fulfilled*

Insight Meditation is a personal awareness and recognition. Realize how underlying habitual energies (greed, hatred and confusion) dominate and are compromising. You are directed by modesty, simple fulfillment, settled, determined, understanding and clear-minded.

Feel the shift in awareness as the habitual buildup of greed is released—unsettled, needy, craving, and searching. The Wise Action of generosity along with renunciation and restraint allows for simplicity and honesty. Sense the settling of the breath's quality and physical tranquility, but also the mind clearing as recognition. Motives and intentions exposed, the self actor is neutralized by a Middle Way appreciation and Wise Action. Acknowledge the weakening and dispersing from greed's domination.

Feel the shift in awareness as the habitual buildup of hatred is released—anger, aversion, frustration and impatience. The Wise Action of goodwill along with renunciation and restraint allow for simplicity and honesty. Sense the breath settling and physical tranquility, but also how the mind clears and attention opens. Motives and intentions exposed, the self actor is neutralized by a Middle Way appreciation and Wise Action. Acknowledge the weakening and dispersing from hatred's domination.

Feel the shift in awareness as the habitual buildup of confusion is released—worry, doubt, anxiety, nervousness and upset. The Wise Action of compassion along with renunciation and restraint allow for simplicity and honesty. Sense the settling in the breath's quality and physical tranquility, but also how the mind clears and attention opens. Motives and intentions exposed, the self actor is neutralized by a Middle Way appreciation and Wise Action. Acknowledge the weakening and dispersing from confusion's domination.

Follow how underlying subconscious dormant, active and transgressing motives are curbed by Wise Action. Simplicity is the key as renunciation and restraint along with reducing material possessions and emotional attachments. Not giving in to knee-jerk responses, feel how the self actor is controlled and greed, hatred and confusion fall away. Note how the body relaxes and mind settles as insight for life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

Meditation has been a blessing and experience like none other. I never imagined myself being this settled. The better I know myself, the more at peace I am. Wise Action slows down my impulsive ways.

February 28—Concern and Goodwill*

The self actor tug-of-war is exhausting. Realized is how the Monkey Mind and the Three Poisons dominate. Be patient and have goodwill. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way follow as relief, joy, and fulfillment as well as a discerning wisdom for life.

The present moment is where you slow down and pause to disengage from the self runaround. Feel the on set of self-impulsiveness emerging, but follow a Middle Way appreciation rather than be overtaken by Monkey Mind impulses. It's kind of like taking a child by the hand and leading him safely across the street. Realized is a new found confidence and insight for life.

Continually mindful, follow the breath's quality and what is happening in life. Awareness is strengthened and becomes second nature. Through Insight Meditation you relate better and are a friend to yourself. Less insecure and indecisive nor given into disappointment or upset, life is put into perspective. Calm and poised, relate to others, nod and smile. Connecting with the breath, acknowledge the self actor domination and carelessness. Life now becomes less problematic.

Following Insight Meditation, share and be concerned. Excitement and nervousness tone down. Angry outbursts stop. The self actor is closer to being a misbehaving three year old. There is happiness for knowing what you are doing and to see things as they truly are. What a relief to not have to be yourself! A kindness, easy going and good nature stand out.

When I get busy or challenged I note how my anxiety level rises. Acknowledging my breath, I'm aware to note my mental confusion. I'm not dominated by anger or hostility. I connect with goodwill to be involved and caring.



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MARCH— The Impermanence of Life-Actions



Insight Meditation and the Middle Way are a personal experience and realization to know life, the world and reality as they are—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self, impersonal nature underscored by purposeful action.

Thoughts flash as well as physical sensations in the course of one or two moments change. Look at family photo albums—newborns to toddlers; grade school class pictures, high school senior bright smiles; young men and women; middle age spread and balding; gray, wrinkled seniors. Many of the persons in the photographs have passed on. Going from a nursing baby all the way to a hunched-over, senior citizen; impermanence dominates, affects all life, the world and the universe. As a present moment awareness, body, feelings, mind, and life-actions are intuitive areas revealing wisdom.

Life has been seen and experienced from a narrow, one-sided point of view—as a single, separate and unique self. But, in fact, life is action based. Conditions, pressures, influences and elements thrive briefly to give the illusion of the individual. A flawed and incomplete perspective of life, the self actor you are attached to is impossible to satisfy and fulfill. The out come is disappointment as habits lead to suffering consequences.

Impermanence and a fondness for self really do hurt! Dissatisfied and unsettled, this is the Catch-22 of change—like trying to cup water, the very things that as a self actor one desires and crave slips away. The more you to try to cling to possessions, are attached to a certain way of life or even to loved ones, you suffer as a self actor.

Nothing endures. The tallest mountains, the sturdiest ant hill, waves pounding a shoreline, a 2,000 year old redwood tree—all crumble, dissolve, erode and change.

The universe itself is expanding (expansion is change as things move and shift about) but perhaps one day to collapse upon itself or continue expanding, but there is always change. Life struggles to survive, find comfort, and safety. Impermanence isn't chaos but a Conditions Arising of causes and effects (the many actions joining to give the illusion of the 'one' or self), and has the qualities of arising, being sticky, stretching in transformation, pulling apart and fading. Suffering literally occurs. Implied in impermanence is purposeful action—careless or responsible, confused or wise, self-motivated or as a Middle Way wisdom appreciation. Life is a series of connected actions mistaken to be self.

Naturally, you ask, why is there impermanence and why do things change? Simply put, the world and life aren't perfect or a paradise. Fruit ripens, falls and then goes bad. There is evolution and transformation—an arising and fading. The present moment is alive and dynamic. A moment or two passes before giving way to the next life-action experience of conditions, pressures, influences and elements. These in turn go on to promote other moments and experiences. Taking one's self all-too-seriously as a self actor, you are deceived. A flawed, incomplete and out of touch misperception, this is a no win situation—the drive to fulfill sensual desires, the drive to fulfill craving for existence, driven by misunderstanding life (These are known as the Three Taints clouding reality and vital to overcome.). As a result of impermanence, you are continually rubbed the wrong way and the self actor delusion suffers.

Impermanence's paradox stands out—**for there to be 'one' or self there must always be two or more conditions, pressures, influences and elements present.** For there to be any 'one' or self as person, animal, plant or whatever, there must be present other generating factors and actions. In turn these conditions are marked by their own conditioned actions. Four Dynamic Forces (solid, liquid, temperature, air) affect impermanence and yourself.

Impermanence isn't haphazard or random, but has the deeper implication of motive's role and purposeful action (careless or wise). The obvious orbits of the stars and planets can be charted, but less certain and defined are the many influences making up your own life because there is the aspect of free will. Revealed is reality's trilogy—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self, impersonal nature.

But why haven't you been able to recognize and understand life's true nature? Because self-absorbed habits misconstrue reality. A general carelessness distances you from reality. From this warped understanding, a self-illusion plays out. A hectic and demanding life, one is oblivious to the obvious. Impermanence dominates life as you react through a self-confusion.

A magician uses slight of hand illusion. Life, too, when first viewed is like a quickly disguised charade. At first glance, things appear to be stable and defined because awareness isn't yet keen enough. The six senses can't keep up with change. Sitting to meditate, life slows down and the present moment is known as impermanent.

March 1—Misunderstanding Life*

“There are three taints: the taint of sensual desire, the taint of being [existence] and the taint of ignorance [misunderstanding]. With the arising of ignorance there is the arising of the taints...When a noble disciple has thus understood the taints, the origin of the taints, the cessation of the taints, and the way leading to the cessation of the taints, he entirely abandons the underlying tendency to lust, he abolishes the underlying tendency to aversion, he extirpates the underlying tendency to the view and conceit 'I am,' and by abandoning ignorance and arousing true knowledge he here and now makes an end of suffering.” MN 9

In a hurry and always eager for what is to come next, at times bored and distracted, or easily overwhelmed and dominated by impulsive habits, missed is life's straightforward changing nature. A general confusion keeps one wandering and unsettled. Mistaken is the impermanent as permanent, the dissatisfying as satisfying, and the non-self as self. An out of touch misperception clouds reality—the drive to fulfill sensual desire, the drive to fulfill craving for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self.

The self actor is careless and impulsive. One assumes it is natural and right to be indulged, but suffers accordingly when expectations aren't met. The let down is like a slap across the face. Caught up in a one-sided, self-pursuit goes from one suffering act to the next. Anxious, exhausted and dissatisfied, the self actor carrying on and dizzying runaround are unsettling. So strong is self-attached delusion that the body/mind self-image seem real. The world and life are viewed incorrectly. Impermanence is a tug-of-war friction.

An *'influence'* in its literal meaning as *'in flowing'* (also referred to as *'effluence'*), an unending stream of sense stimulated action and energy is jarring. The body is a receptacle; feelings are pleasant, painful or neutral experiences; the mind reacts instinctively as a mistaken self-awareness; and life-actions play out. Purposeful action underscores all life as a Conditions Arising causes and effects (to be detailed in June), the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self. Penetrating impermanence, life's true nature is known. Through a Middle Way appreciation life is recognized as conditions arising rather than self-obsessed.

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Now settled and centered on the breath's quality, feel impermanence's affects. Sense the pressure, subtle friction, stress and on going changes in the body/mind system. Note how misunderstanding life as a self experience keeps one restless. Connect with a Middle Way appreciation not defined by the extremes for indulgence/gratification or hostility/aggression. You go from misperception and suffering to understanding and well being. Feel the physical stress as well as mental confusion. At odds and off balance by impermanence, a self-illusion is continually propped up, clung to and struggled with. Trying to cope with life while being knocked about, one is left exhausted, dissatisfied and suffers.

Feel the habitual buildup. Through a body scan settling, gently and slowly allow impermanent pressure to disperse and fall away. Feel how the body tenses and the mind narrows. Sense how the breath's quality begins to shift as impermanence is recognized. All the pulsing energy reflects charged actions and energies. Settling down, an awareness and realization for the 'in flow' of action is known.

Revealed is a lack of proper attention. The general Monkey Mind distractions of desire, hatred, laziness, restlessness and confusion dominate. Deceived as a self actor, you go on to react carelessly and impulsively. Dormant, active and transgressing habits, greed, hatred and confusion lead to suffering consequences.

The reverse takes place through meditation. Connected to the present and Wisely Reflecting, meditating reveals a complex nature. The Five Wise Actions are a guideline. Impermanence is known and the suffering generated from careless actions realized. There is insight for the non-self (the many actions in the 'one') nature as Conditions Arising causes and effects. Realized is the role motives play as purposeful action affecting life. As concentration matures discerned are the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path to liberation. Begun as a Wise Reflection of impermanence, these insights into life are to be detailed in the weeks to come.

I'm aware of impermanence's affects. I feel how I tighten up under the pressure and get lost in my thoughts. Now I'm wisely looking at life.

March 2—Impermanence’s Characteristics: arising, sticky, stretching in transformation, pulling apart, and fading*

“All conditioned things are impermanent” — when one sees this with wisdom, one turns away from suffering. This is the path to purification.

“All conditioned things are unsatisfactory” — when one sees this with wisdom, one turns away from suffering. This is the path to purification.

“All things are not-self” — when one sees this with wisdom, one turns away from suffering. This is the path to purification.” DH 277-279

Settled and centered, feel how an active and persistent energy carries over as a distraction. Conscious of the body, feelings, mind and life-actions, impermanence is known and experienced by its arising and fading as well as the characteristics and qualities of being sticky, stretching in transformation and pulling apart. Impermanence is a wave-like affect surging, buffeting and passing over.

The hourglass-like of accumulated habits stands out. Note how greed is sticky as you delight in desire, but then inevitably there is change and the moment stretches, finally to pull apart and fades. Hatred has an intense sticky grip, but then too stretches, pulls apart and fades. Confusion is deceptive but nevertheless sticky, stretches, pulls apart and fades. Moment after moment, impermanence is struggled with as an arising and fading wave-like affect. Follow how self-directed attachments begin to shrink. Allow the many pressuring habits to slowly release and disperse. Wisely Reflecting, impermanence is realized. Meditating stress levels are reduced to know life’s compelling nature. Slowly ease into the experience. Now settled and less resistant, Wisely Reflecting follow impermanence’s pressures.

Body—The ebb and flow of impermanence is physically jarring. Pressures build, an itch tingles, then ends. Sensations throb. The body recoils with impermanent passing pressures. As a Middle Way appreciation, regard the body without reacting or passing judgment—the arising, stickiness, stretching in transformation, pulling apart and fading.

Feelings—Pleasant, painful, and neutral sense-contacted impressions arise and fade. These feelings generate conscious reactions.

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Pleasant feelings are clung to, painful episodes are avoided, and neutral encounters neglected. As a Middle Way appreciation follow the feeling without reacting or passing judgment—the arising, stickiness, stretching in transformation, pulling apart and fading.

Mind—Recognize the mental preoccupations and how the mind narrow on a thought experience. Note how the mental pressures are all consuming.

The Monkey Mind distractions (desire, hatred, laziness, restlessness and confusion) create additional tension and uncertainty as the mind flits about. Follow how the attention contracts to regard a subject. As a Middle Way appreciation follow mental states without reacting or passing judgment—the arising, stickiness, stretching in transformation, pulling apart and fading.

Life-Actions—Driven by purposeful action, reflected are the many actions in the 'one' or self. The 'in flow' of conditions, pressures, influences and elements interact. As a Middle Way appreciation follow life-actions without reacting or passing judgment—the arising, stickiness, stretching in transformation, pulling apart, and fading.

Meditating I'm able to recognize impermanence and how I'm affected. I'm aware how I'm challenged and stressed. I simply follow the arising and fading of the moment without reacting or judging the experience.

March 3—Dissatisfying and Unsettling*

***“Perceiving permanence in the impermanent,
pleasure in the stressful,
self in what’s not-self,
attractiveness in the unattractive,
beings, destroyed by wrong-view,
go mad, out of their minds.” AN 4, 49***

As a deepening awareness and appreciation for life and action, begin to see impermanence’s underlying qualities. Not only is there change in life but how one then is affected—a general frustration and unsettling as a general dissatisfaction stands out.

Highlighting change is a corresponding stress, tension, and degrees of discomfort from outright pain and physical suffering as well as psychological torment. A baby being born experiences ‘birth trauma,’ items wear down and break, a situation is stressful. Acknowledge how the moment arises, is sticky, gives way to stretch in transformation, pulls apart and then fades.

Compounded by self-directed carelessness, the breath’s quality and attention reveals an indifference to impermanence. The battle and torment takes place subconsciously as a self-illusion is upheld and desires sought. Quickly forming action sequences are jarring. Caught off guard and overwhelmed, you blow off steam then try to make the best of an uncomfortable or difficult situation. Everything is done to please and reinforce a self-ideal.

With life as short-lived, there is a general dissatisfaction and uneasiness to impermanence. All one’s hard work and efforts come undone and go for not as change inevitably is unsettling and undermining. This isn’t pessimism or cynicism, but the real, hard-knocks truth about life. The stock market drops, history moves in cycles as change effects everything and everyone. Overwhelmed by impermanence, one reacts impulsively through greed, hatred and confusion. The self actor suffers, knows sorrow, laments, feels pain, and is affected and touched by grief and despair. Mistaken is life as self rather than overlapping action sequences giving way to the next purposeful action. Impermanence follows the undoing of action sequences, giving the illusion of self, time and place.

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Like a wave building-up and passing on, impermanence plays out. Connected with the breath's quality, Wise Reflection follows impermanence's affect on the body and mind. Note how the breath is labored while the mind is affected by Monkey Mind distractions. Dissatisfaction and restlessness are experienced. With nothing remaining the same for more than an instance, dissatisfaction stands out. Change comes as a struggle and unhappiness. Subconsciously one is disenchanted yet as a survival instinct looks the other way. A deeply sighed frustration, frowning or rolling of the eyes, disappointment wins out.

Settled as an insight awareness, slowly recognize the affecting short-comings. Sense the impulsive reactions, impatience, a quickly aroused temper or tearful breakdown to impermanence's unsettling. Wisely Reflecting, recognized is impermanence's role and how you are affected.

Feel how pressures buildup. Note the moment arising. Sense the stickiness. Acknowledge the stretching in transformation. A pulling apart friction takes place as the moment fades. Gently allow the impermanent pressure to disperse and fall away on its own. Feel where you are clinging and physically tense as well as attention narrowing. Follow how the breath's quality begins to change as life is recognized as so many impermanent actions.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact feels the impermanent stress in the moment; Sustained Contact directs attention to identify the physical or mental disturbance; Interest relates to the present dissatisfaction; 'Joy' is not to react impulsively as a self actor, but find a meaningful conclusion; and having One-Pointed Clarity as an active awareness and understanding, impermanence's role is realized.

Life is bitter-sweet. Rarely do you get what you want and it certainly won't last. I'm seeing how I react and how things then play out.

March 4—An Arising and Fading Friction*

“Impermanent are all compounded things, they arise and cease, that is their nature: they come into being and pass away, release from them is bliss supreme.” DN 16

Connected as a basic awareness, distinguish impermanence’s affects. There is an arising of physical pressures, feelings experienced, mental reactions and life-actions generated as well as their fading away. As a moment changes there is an actual subtle friction within impermanence as conditions, pressures, influences and elements ebb. Note how these actions bring stress to life.

Body impermanence arises and fades: Acknowledge physical pressures (breath quality, facial muscles, chest as well as abdomen). Follow how sensations arise in the present, are sticky, stretch in transformation, pull apart and fade. Note the strained friction ‘inflow’ of pressured instances.

Acknowledge the stretching and expansion within the breath, then the fading as the breath is exhaled. Note the relaxing of facial muscles, shoulders, back, abdomen and buttocks as well as through the legs. Follow the breath’s sequence, the pausing then lifting of the diaphragm, followed by the exhaling and fading of the breath. Life’s impermanent nature passes without having to react as a self actor. Through Wise Reflection and a Middle Way appreciation, connect to understand life and reality as they truly are—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact note the breath’s quality; Sustained Contact acknowledges the pressures arising and the stickiness; Interest follows the stretching in transformation and the pulling apart friction within impermanence; ‘Joy’ notes the passing and fading of impermanence; and having One-Pointed Clarity life is recognized without self-intrusion.

Feeling impermanence arises and fades: Pleasant, painful and neutral feelings highlight impermanence. There is no moment or experience that doesn’t have a corresponding ‘in flow’ of feelings. The senses are under a constant barrage. The self actor struggles with the ongoing ebb and flow of situations and experiences.

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Note the friction as sense-contacted feelings play out (eyes/sight, ears/sound, tongue/taste, nose/smell, tactile/touch and mind/thought awareness)—an arising, stickiness, stretching in transforming, pulling apart and fading.

As the pulsing wave-like flow passes by sit allowing the 'inflow' to play out. Eyes/sight feelings are impermanent; ears/sound feelings are impermanent; nose/smell feelings are impermanent; tongue/taste feelings are impermanent; touch/tactile feelings are impermanent; and mind/thought feelings are impermanent.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact note the breath's quality; Sustained Contact acknowledges the sense-contacted feeling arising and stickiness; Interest notes the stretching in transformation and pulling apart of the feeling as a friction within impermanence; 'Joy' is experienced as impermanence is allowed to pass freely; and having One-Pointed Clarity life is recognized without self-intrusion.

Sense the shift away from impulsive reactions and how self-identification subsides. The breath reveals a passing physical friction arising and fading. A body/mind association, dormant, active, and transgressing habits link together a self-identity.

Wisely Reflecting and through a Middle Way appreciation, sense the shift away from self-centered impulsive reactions. Feel how self-obsession settles and quiets detaching from compromising distractions. Note how you separate from impermanence's compelling actions.

I see how things play out—arise and fade. My body and mind become stressed as feelings are generated and engaged. I allow the moment to pass on its own.

March 5—An Arising and Fading Friction Continued*

“Impermanent, subject to change, are compounded things. Strive on with heedfulness!” DN 16

Mind impermanence arises and fades: Focused and directed as an open flowing awareness, acknowledge the affects and burden of mental states. The mind searches for activity and to be involved as a self actor. Here as a personal experience, realize the ‘in flow’ of mental states stimulated through many actions. Note how a thought arises to occupy the mind as a conscious experience. Follow how one bears down and the mind narrows to engage in the thought. Feel how stress and tension arise as the self actor clings to achieve equilibrium in life. The impermanent friction of passing thoughts is unsettling.

As a Middle Way appreciation one moves away from the extremes of indulgence and aggression associated with self-habits. Calming down, recognize the ongoing pattern and prattle of the mind. The subconscious is revealed as dormant, active, and transgressing factors. Life slows to a concentrated appreciation, discerning impermanence’s nature of reality.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact notes as mental pressures arise and are sticky; Sustained Contact acknowledges the affecting greed, hatred or confusion; Interest feels the stretching and pulling apart friction; ‘Joy’ experiences the fading strain as impermanence passes and fades; and having One-Pointed Clarity life is recognized without self-intrusion.

Life-action impermanence arises and fades: Relax to recognize impermanence’s affect. Following the breath’s quality, Wise Reflection identifies and explores the arising and fading of life-action sequences. Life’s overall driven nature is noted as arising, sticky, stretching in transformation, pulling apart and then fading. A wave-like affect spills over as actions join to give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact notes the breath’s quality; Sustained Contact acknowledges the life-action energy arising and sticky; Interest feels the stretching and pulling apart friction within impermanence; ‘Joy’ experiences the life-action affect of impermanence’s passing and fading; and having One-Pointed Clarity life is recognized without self-intrusion.

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Sense the shift away from impulsive reactions and note how self-identification subsides. The breath reveals a passing arising and fading. A body/mind association, dormant, active, and transgressing habits link together a self-identity.

Wisely Reflecting and following a Middle Way appreciation, sense the shift away from self-centered impulsive reactions. Detaching from compromising distractions, feel how the self-obsession settles and quiets.

Experiencing impermanence, I realize how I struggle. I step away from my fast-paced life to know awareness and have insight.

March 6—Impermanence's Suffering*

“There are these three forms of suffering, my friend: the suffering of pain, the suffering of [mental] fabrication, the suffering of change.” SN 38, 14

Jostled and unsettled, momentum builds-up, reach a peak as stress, then spill over. In impermanence's wake suffering is experienced. There is the obvious suffering of sickness, aging and death, but also the psychological torment of dormant, active and transgressing habits. Try as you will, no one escapes or is immune to impermanence's onslaught.

Problems and suffering exist on three levels revealing a self-centered theme. First, the everyday problems and difficulties everyone experiences, feels and shares in common such as physical pains and discomforts, the day-to-day inconveniences and travails as well as Murphy's Law of things just not going right.

Second, there exists the suffering and problems brought about by change or the short-term nature of all experiences. No matter how gratifying, things and life are impermanent. The good time had on a vacation comes to an end, relationships end; possessions break, are lost or stolen; friends or loved ones move in and out of your life. Reflected is a general dissatisfaction.

And third, is the more pervasive suffering brought on by self-motivated actions. Luxury, convenience, good times, ever pursuing and involved, the end result is disappointment and a degree of suffering. Having more, one is encouraged to indulge and satisfy desires. When inconvenienced disappointment, anger and doubt are experienced. Behind it all is an out-of-control, restless self-craving. Self-identification is a barrier and hindrance to knowing the true nature of life and reality.

Acknowledge the breath for stress and tension. Note impermanence's pressured buildup. Feel the recoil and reaction as impermanence intrudes on life. There is frustration, resentment, anger and bitterness, being short-tempered, solemn or withdrawn. Note the communication between the body and the mind. A careless self-driven actor complicates things. In denial, looking to come out ahead or jumping to conclusions, one is estranged from life (the drive to fulfill sensual desires, the drive to fulfill craving for existence, driven by misunderstanding life).

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Wisely Reflecting, follow how you react to impermanence. Slowly begin to release the unsettling friction. Acknowledge the shift as the breath changes and tension begins to disperse. The habitual accumulation gradually empties. Impermanence works in one's favor as the moment is allowed to pass rather than struggle with it. Only when attached as a self actor is suffering overwhelming. Life is recognized without self-intrusion.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact feels impermanence's burden and gravity; Sustained Contact identifies the affecting change and stress; Interest directs the mind to note the spaciousness or emptiness between thoughts; 'Joy' realizes how to better deal with suffering challenges; and having One-Pointed Clarity the self-fixation is dropped.

I didn't realize I was suffering. I just assumed that's how things were. I've been neglectful. Suffering isn't my idea of fun but I see how I contribute to make things worse.

March 7—Purposeful Action*

“I will teach you the Law of Causation...” SN

While life is fast moving and challenging, a purposeful action connects the seemingly random events. Everything has its causes and effects (the many actions joining to give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self). Actions follow as a result of motives (karma to be detailed in May)—either careless or wise actions. Revealed is a pattern and meaning to life. As a self actor you seek answers, identify, project, have bias, and a one-sided reference. Dormant, active or transgressing greed, hatred and confusion lead to suffering consequences and highlight life’s storyline. Wisely Reflecting, the forces compelling defining and compelling the self actor are known. Through a Middle Way appreciation, self indulgent and aggressive extremes are recognized.

When careless and unaware the breath and mind are stressed and unclear. Meditation connects one with goodwill, generosity, honesty, sobriety and abstinence. Breathe in deeply through the nose as a present moment connected awareness. Sense the fast moving and unsettling ‘inflow’ of impermanent distracting actions. Feel the stress and pressure in the body (facial tension, chest, abdominal and pelvic strain). Settled physically, the mind follows to quiet down as a clear, open-flowing awareness. A Middle Way appreciation as Wise Reflection distinguishes life.

Acknowledge the buildup of careless habits: hatred and animosity are destructive; lying leads to being distrusted and loneliness; stealing is all about self-gratification; sexual trysts are a carnal outlet without true regard or compassion for others; drug and alcohol use are stupefying. You suffer as a consequence of reckless actions. While these disturbing experiences and actions are impermanent, they are complicated by self-obsession. Following a Middle Way appreciation, Wise Action is engaged: goodwill follows acceptance and being patient; generosity is sharing and giving freely; honesty is a sincere communicate; caring one is compassionate rather than sexually driven; and sobriety is an aware responsibility.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact regards the breath’s quality and physical manifestations; Sustained Contact identifies hotspots of agitation and stress; Interest settles mental activity; ‘Joy’ positively connects with the moment to feel and understand how motives and habits go on to form as thoughts, speech and actions; and having One-Pointed Clarity the purposeful action underscoring life in general is realized.

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Meditating I'm able to understand myself. My actions have far reaching consequences. There is a one-sided carelessness or having Wise Action.

March 8—The Five Remembrances*

“There are these five facts that one should reflect on often...I am subject to aging, have not gone beyond aging. I am subject to illness, have not gone beyond illness. I am subject to death, have not gone beyond death. I will grow different, separate from all that is dear and appealing to me. I am the owner of my actions, heir to my actions, born of my actions, related through my actions, and have my actions as my arbitrator. Whatever I do, for good or for evil, to that will I fall heir. These are the five facts that one should reflect on often.”
AN 5, 57

Practical and relevant, five key observations relating to life and impermanence stand out—sickness, aging, death, inevitable change and responsibility for actions.

**The remembrance and recognition of sickness—
sickness as part of life, I’m not beyond sickness.**

**The remembrance and recognition of aging—
aging as part of life, I’m not beyond aging.**

**The remembrance and recognition of death—
dying as part of life, I’m not beyond death.**

**The remembrance and recognition of loss—
loss as part of life, everything that I own, possess and everyone I know, respect and hold dear, will pass on.**

**The remembrance and recognition of responsible actions—
responsible for my actions and their consequences, my actions make up my life.**

These recognitions are true, certain and inevitable, rather than being negative, a despair or denial. Not caught by surprise, Wisely Reflecting and a Middle Way appreciation discern life as they actually are. With nothing enduring, dissatisfaction and subject to suffering, impermanence is a part of life. Only the self actor is at odds with and turns away from life’s harsh reality.

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Feel the awareness as well as relief and release to actually not struggle and be at odds with impermanence. Insight for life is known. Through a Middle Way appreciation one isn't caught up in the extreme reactions of indulgence and aggression.

Ever mindful, I connect with my life's circumstances.

March 9—The Remembrance and Recognition of Illness*

“I am subject to illness, have not gone beyond illness.” AN 5, 57

The remembrance and recognition of illness— sickness as part of life, I’m not beyond illness.

No one feels well all the time. Weakness, fatigue and illness, some days are challenging and demanding, leaving one exhausted and reeling. Noting life’s frailty, you move away from self-reactions to having Wise Reflection for sickness. Previously in denial, impermanence is revealed. As an insight for illness you are better prepared and able to deal with disabling moments.

While not being outright sick at this moment, note how energy ebbs throughout the day. One tires, needs a break or rest. Headaches arise when under pressure as well as muscle strains, injuries, and mild discomfort from colds and the odd illness. Acknowledge how you react to these moments, overwhelmed, emotional or disgusted. The moment is repressed or an attempt made to flee. These are common reactions. Note how the moment arises and then fades affected by conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Experience the impermanence and transition for the moment not as a good or bad judgment, but through a Middle Way appreciation. Not resisting or taken aback, rest-up during taxing and weakened episodes. Recognize the ebb and flow of passing energy. Note when you are well and strong but also when fatigued and unwell. There is an insightful moment before reacting and tensing-up as a self actor. Wisely Reflecting, through a Middle Way appreciation one isn’t caught up in extreme reactions.

Acknowledge the body’s biology—strong and thriving, but also frail and susceptible. Listen to the ongoing mental dialogue as self-panicked worry. Acknowledge the habitual buildup bringing one to react. Acknowledge the frustration and depression when sick. Note how you recoil and are on edge. Rest and quiet are needed. Medicine, treatment and care should be given. No one is immune nor can a suit of armor be worn. Pain, injury and illness occur. Everyone is affected by sickness. View the ebb and flow of conditions, pressures, influences and elements. The many actions join to give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self.

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Acknowledge how habitual reactions arise. Wisely Reflecting, dormant, active and transgressing subconscious habit potentials are revealed. Appreciate the body/mind communication as a present moment feedback. Feel the arising, stickiness, the stretching in transformation, the pulling apart as well as the fading nature of sickness. Acknowledge the moment as impermanent.

Try keeping a clear mind without being overwhelmed by any negative feelings or thoughts. Acknowledge the degrees of distress and panic. Self-reactions complicate the issue. A flawed, incomplete and out of touch misperception clouds the moment—the drive to fulfill sensual desire, the drive to fulfill craving for existence, driven by mistaking life as self. As a breath recognition, acknowledge the apprehension to realize impermanence and the affects of the many conditions contributing to the body/mind self-illusion. Wisely Reflecting, a Middle Way recognition for life without self-intrusion is discerned.

Infatuated with health, careless and neglectful, one takes pride as a self actor for well being. In denial, lax thoughts, speech, and actions dominate. Life may be impermanent, but is underscored by purposeful action—impulsive or aware, careless or wise. The remembrance and recognition for sickness is a sobering recollection.

Change is a normal part of life. I can't deny sickness, but I don't have to make myself sicker by a having a sour attitude, fear, or being upset. Understanding and patience help me heal.

March 10—The Remembrance and Recognition of Aging*

“I am subject to aging, have not gone beyond aging.” AN 5, 57

The remembrance and recognition of aging— aging as part of life, I’m not beyond aging.

Honest and aware, there is no denying aging. The awareness of impermanence is an acknowledgement and acceptance for this natural fact and undeniable transition in life. Noting physical weakness, you move from self-reactions to connect with the Wise Reflection for aging.

Look at the wrinkles, sagging and stretched skin, and the middle-aged spread. Contemplate a parent’s face and realize the future. You are aware and have insight for life. What is to be gained by realizing aging? Not only acceptance of the inevitable, but the deeper realization and impermanence’s affects. The self actor reacts out of desperation, frustration and outright confusion. Aging, note how breathing is more labored as well as the body’s strength and vitality weakening. Aches and pains as well as sickness set in. Mental capacity also diminishes. Not waiting till mortality is incapacitating, recognize impermanence’s arising and fading. Through a Middle Way appreciation one isn’t caught up by the extreme reactions for indulgence or aggression.

Acknowledge the concern relating to aging. The obvious is the arising and fading physical energy, but also how mental capacities slow. Viewing the ebbing and flow of conditions, pressures, influences and elements, the many actions give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self is realized. Acknowledge how habitual reactions are tormenting. Through Insight Meditation dormant, active and transgressing subconscious habit potentials are revealed. Follow the body/mind communication as a present moment feedback. Feel the arising, stickiness, the stretching in transformation, the pulling apart as well as the fading nature of aging. Acknowledge the moment as impermanent.

Try keeping a clear mind without being overwhelmed by negative feelings or thoughts. Acknowledge the degree of distress and panic. Self-reactions complicated the issue. A flawed, incomplete and out of touch misperception clouds the moment—the drive to fulfill sensual desire, the drive to fulfill craving for existence, driven by mistaking life as self. As a breath quality recognition,

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acknowledge impermanence and the affect of the many conditions contributing to the body/mind self-illusion. Wisely Reflecting, a Middle Way recognition for life without self-intrusion is discerned.

Infatuated with well being, careless and neglectful, one takes pride as a self actor for health. In denial, lax thoughts, speech, and actions dominate. Life may be impermanent, but is underscored by purposeful action—impulsive or aware, careless or wise. The remembrance and recognition for aging is a sobering recollection.

Who doesn't age? Impermanence affects everyone and everything. So am I aging.

March 11—The Remembrance and Recognition of Death*

“I am subject to death, have not gone beyond death.” AN 5, 57

The remembrance and recognition of death— dying as part of life, I’m not beyond death.

Not a morbid or fatalistic view, death is an honest realization of life. Wise Reflection connects with mortality. Sitting quiet and concentrated, feel the settling of the breath as a gentle wisped present recognition. Follow how life-action energies arise, play out and then fade. Through a Middle Way appreciation one isn’t caught up in the extreme reactions for indulgence or aggression.

There are many little ‘deaths’ and not only funeral dirges. A busy morning at work comes to an end. You manage to make your way home through slow commuter traffic. You file for divorce. Pleasurable moments arise and fade affected by impermanence. There is a general dissatisfaction to life. Acknowledge the shift away from habitual reactions. No two moments are alike. There is the everyday unsettling level and there is the insightful realization for impermanence.

Feel the challenge, frustration or fear associated with death. The passing away of parents, family members, friends and loved ones, impermanence touches everyone. Awareness as a deeper recognition stands out. Without fear, know death as a normal action passing. Acknowledge the concern related to death. There is the obvious diminishing of physical energy, but also mental short comings. View the ebb and flow of conditions, pressures, influences and elements. The many actions give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self.

Acknowledge the habitual buildup of reactions. As a Wise Reflection dormant, active and transgressing subconscious potentials are revealed. Appreciate the body/mind communication as a present moment feedback. Feel the arising, the stickiness, the stretching in transformation, the pulling apart as well as the fading nature of death. Acknowledge the moment as impermanent.

Try keeping a clear mind without being overwhelmed by any negative feelings or thoughts. Acknowledge the degrees of distress and panic. Self reactions complicate the issue. A flawed, incomplete and out of touch misperception clouds the moment—the drive to fulfill sensual desire, the drive to fulfill craving for

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existence, driven by mistaking life as self. As a breath quality recognition, acknowledge the apprehension to realize impermanence and the affect of the many conditions contributing to the body/mind self-illusion. Wisely Reflecting, a Middle Way recognition for life without self-intrusion is discerned.

Infatuated with life, careless and neglectful, one takes pride as a self actor in for life. In denial, lax in thoughts, speech, and actions dominate. Life may be impermanent, but is underscored by purposeful action—impulsive or aware, careless or wise. The remembrance and recognition for death is a sobering recollection.

So it is, everything and everyone passes on. I'm hesitant, but meditation connects me with impermanence. I'm seeing impermanence's role in life.

March 12—The Remembrance and Recognition of Inevitable Loss*

“I will grow different, separate from all that is dear and appealing to me.” AN 5, 57

**The Remembrance and recognition of inevitable loss—
loss as part of life, everything that I own, possess and everyone I know,
respect and hold dear, will pass on.**

Eventually separating from everything loved, held dear, and possessed, life as action has its season and passing—conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Dishes break, clothing wears thin, paint on the house fades, the roof leaks, the car gets dented, while on the more personal level friends and loved ones move in and out of one’s life. Noting the shortcomings, move from self-reactions to connect as a Wise Reflection for loss. This isn’t a doom’s day, helpless scenario, but reveals the true nature of life and reality.

Settling into the meditation, awareness now opens to a clear recognition. Feel the shift away from the one-sided, pressured self-attitude. Acknowledge the worry related to loss, the feeling of frustration when loss takes. Note the recoil, tensing up and unsettling of self-expectations. As a breath quality recognition, feel the shortcomings for loss. View the ebb and flow of conditions, pressures, influences and elements; the many actions give the illusion of the ‘one.’ Feel patience and goodwill. Impermanence touches and affects everyone and everything. Through a Middle Way appreciation one isn’t caught up in the extreme reactions.

Acknowledge the habitual buildup of reactions. Wisely Reflecting, dormant, active and transgressing subconscious habit potentials are revealed. Appreciate the body/mind communication as a present moment feedback. Feel the arising, stickiness, the stretching in transformation, the pulling apart as well as the fading nature of inevitable loss. Acknowledge the moment as impermanent.

Try keeping a clear mind without being overwhelmed by any negative feelings or thoughts. Acknowledge the degrees of distress and panic. Self reactions complicate the issue. A flawed, incomplete and out of touch misperception clouds the moment—the drive to fulfill sensual desire, the drive to fulfill craving for existence, driven by mistaking life as self. As a breath quality recognition, acknowledge the apprehension to realize impermanence and the affect of the many

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conditions contributing to the body/mind self-illusion. Wisely Reflecting, a Middle Way recognition for life without self-intrusion is discerned.

Attached, careless and neglectful, one takes pride as a self actor in possessions and relationships. In denial, lax thoughts, speech and actions dominate. Life may be impermanent, but is underscored by purposeful action—impulsive or aware, careless or wise. The remembrance and recognition of loss is a sobering recollection.

I know all too well life is about loss. It's how you handle the defeats that make a difference. No matter how hard you try, things won't stay as they are. You better prepare yourself for the inevitable short-coming or loss.

March 13—The Remembrance and Recognition of Responsible Actions*

“I am the owner of my actions, heir to my actions, born of my actions, related through my actions, and have my actions as my arbitrator. Whatever I do, for good or for evil, to that will I fall heir.” AN 5, 57

**The remembrance and recognition of responsible action—
responsible for my actions and their consequences, my actions make up my life.**

Settling into the meditation, the breath's quality and the energy making up the moment stand out. Usually one remains hyper-active and charged by the day's activities. Here the subconscious is exposed. The self actor is careless and impulsive. Awareness for the Five Wise Actions as responsibility brings a Middle Way recognition and understanding. Noting the actions, move from self-reactions to be wisely connected. Feel how compelling habitual actions arise to affect you both physically and mentally. Greed, hatred and confusion direct thoughts, speech and actions. The body is stressed as well as feeling challenged, frustrated and short-tempered. Note the recoil and tension. Through the breath's recognition, now see beyond the self-deluded charade. Here the ebbing and flow of conditions, pressures, influences and elements as action sequences is discerned. A purposeful action underscores life.

Breathe deeply 5-7 times through the nose to help establish a present awareness for one's actions. Greed is wanton, hatred upsetting, while confusion is shrouded in doubt and worry. Open to disperse these one-sided, self-reactions. The Wise Actions of goodwill, generosity, honesty, abstinence and sobriety aren't a censorship, but applied as insight. Through a Middle Way appreciation, self extremes aren't overwhelming.

Acknowledge the habitual buildup of reactions as a result of self-centered actions. Wisely Reflecting, dormant, active and transgressing subconscious habit potentials are revealed. Appreciate the body/mind communication as a present moment feedback. Feel the arising, the stickiness, stretching in transformation, the pulling apart as well as the fading nature of your actions. Acknowledge the moment as impermanent.

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Try keeping a clear mind without being overwhelmed by any negative feelings or thoughts. Acknowledge the degrees of distress and panic. Self-reactions complicate the issue. A flawed, incomplete and out of touch misperception clouds the moment—the drive to fulfill sensual desire, the drive to fulfill craving for existence, driven by mistaking life as self. As a breath quality recognition, realize impermanence and the affects of the many conditions contributing to a body/mind self-illusion. Wisely Reflecting, a Middle Way recognition for life without self-intrusion is discerned.

Infatuated with personal actions, one becomes careless and neglectful, taking pride as a self actor in abilities and accomplishments. In denial, lax thoughts, speech, and actions dominate. Life may be impermanent, but is underscored by purposeful action—impulsive or aware, careless or wise. The remembrance and recognition for responsible actions is a sobering recollection.

I feel how charged up I become. I hesitate, but accept the truth. I'm careless and get carried away. Wise Reflection and Wise Action direct me to understanding my life.

March 14—The Four Dynamic Forces*

“The four great elements [the properties of earth, liquid, fire, and wind] are the cause and condition for the manifestation of the material form aggregate.” MN 109

Science has come along ways in explaining nature, but misses the subtleties within impermanence and the Conditions Arising causes and effects sequence of purposeful action. Researchers overlook that they are also a part of their findings and connected to the ‘big picture.’ Investigating ever deeper, elusive elementary particles have been reduced to such names as strange, charm, quarks and neutrinos. Requiring concrete, without-a-doubt proof of so many precise equations, science has become a numbers game. The straightforward wisdom of the east can now fill in the gaps where research, calculations, experiments, and high-tech equipment aren’t able to penetrate or measure. Discernment, insight and wisdom out do theories and numbers. While science divides through analysis, Insight Meditation is intuitive and practical, leading to awareness and the experience of the Middle Way directed away from self-extremes. You, too, are part of the conditioned thriving universe—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self impersonal nature underscored by purposeful action.

Four Dynamic Forces of extension, cohesion, temperature, and motion highlight impermanent action. The Four Forces are the very essence of action and change (the many actions joining as the ‘one’ or self) with all natural-based phenomena made up of fluctuating energies. The dominating element makes for solidity (earth, physical body both soft and hard), fluid (liquid, moisture or gas), temperature (heat or cold), or motion (related to space). Already connected with the present on the basic level of body, feelings, mind and life-actions, now Wise Reflection brings you to a deeper realization. Affected by impermanence, the four elemental forces in turn have their own conditions, pressures, influences and elements.

But where is the earth element and the water element? Where are the air element and the heat element? **The paradox of impermanence is that for there to be ‘one’ there must always be two or more conditions, pressures, influences or elements—the many actions joining to give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self.** For there to be any ‘one’ person, animal, plant or whatever, multiple actions exist and interact. In turn these actions have their own influencing actions. You can’t point to

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a particle of solid, liquid, motion or temperature because there is no unique, select or individual source. They are affected by the actions of the many.

Confusion and challenges arise from the inability to deal with and accept change as well as the general misperception for life as a separate and unique self. Now keenly aware, experience life as it truly is—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self impersonal nature underscored by purposeful action. The conditioned realms (Sense, Fine-Material and Immaterial Realms detailed next) are affected by impermanence. Unaffected is the Ultimate Reality of the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana (December).

The Extension (solid and material forms) Dynamic—The body, for example, the earth and anything ‘solid’ or material in form is molded by extension. The characteristics of hard and soft (which are relative) allow for a material body to occupy space, resist pressures as well as prevent other forms from occupying the same space. Skeletal bones, organs and the body come about as part of the Extension Dynamic. The Extension Dynamic connects as a body awareness to note the physical nature, the components and relationship to discern impermanence.

Forming out of solid forces, note the weight and pressure of the body while sitting. Sense the solid nature of the aligned spine. Feel the weight settled at the hips and buttocks, hamstring muscles stretch from sitting cross-legged as well as the pressure at the knees. Acknowledge the head balanced at the neck. Breathing, feel the diaphragm moving as well as the abdominal muscles and the internal placement of organs within the torso. Note how skin stretches and shapes around a physical form. Feel how the body’s biology goes on to arise then fade through joining conditions and actions. As a present moment awareness, acknowledge impermanence’s flow as arising, sticky, stretching in transformation, pulling apart and fading.

Connected as a breath awareness, realize how nourishment is taken in, absorbed and broken down as energy making up the solid (the many actions in the ‘one’ or self). Acknowledge the body’s weight and gravity. Sensations, itching, twitching, or pressures arising, are sticky, stretch in transformation, pull apart, then fade. Note how conditions, pressures, influences and elements combine to make-up the solid forces. Acknowledge the firmness and physical bulk. The skeleton and organs function together to give the overall affect of the body. Aware of the passing pressures, sensations and feelings, the body is affected as an impermanent union of actions.

Wisely Reflecting, a Middle Way appreciation for impermanence becomes clear. The passing of discernable changes over the course of years, an infant becomes a teenager, enters middle age then is a senior citizen. Impermanence arises out of

actions and then fades. Feel how the mind focuses, absorbs and grasps to deal with solid actions. Attached to the body as a self-deception, suffering is experienced.

All solid elements both within and externally are Wisely Reflected as impermanent. Feel how awareness for a one-sided, self-view is released to a discerning recognition. As a Middle Way appreciation, one stops measuring and being defined by a body/mind identification and turns away from a flawed, incomplete, and out of touch misunderstanding (the drive to fulfill sensual desires, the drive to fulfill craving for existence, driven by mistaking life as self). Disenchanted, you detach from the solid element.

A clarifying realization, the true nature of life and reality are experienced—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self impersonal nature underscored by purposeful action.

I feel the solid elements. A remarkable physiology, so much is happening—a living, breathing expression of connected and changing actions.

March 15—The Cohesion (liquid, moisture, gas) Dynamic*

“When he dies...the water [element] returns and goes back to the body of water...” MN 76

The Cohesion Dynamic allows for scattered particles to join into bodies or forms. The elements of solid (extension) and liquid (cohesion) are closely interrelated; when cohesion weakens and stops, extension also breaks down. The Cohesion Dynamic connects as an awareness of feelings. Noted are the passing pressures and sensations as impermanence is discerned.

Water and all liquids reflect cohesion, ‘greasing’ impermanence’s flow. When some solid forms melt or liquefy, cohesion then dominates as fluid. Your intake of liquids accounts for the body being 70% cohesion, keeping everything lubricated and functioning. Drinking water, feel how the liquid enters, passes, is absorbed, and bonds with the solid-body dynamic.

Water, fluid, blood, sweat, saliva, urine, tears, waste and discharge—are all part of the liquid flow within the body. The eyes blink as lubrication, the nose is runny, there is perspiration, saliva is swallowed, and there are fluid excretions. Without liquid, the solid elements would dry up and stop functioning. Realize the sustenance from liquids and how it allows the body to be flexible and supple. Following the breath, relax to know the liquid cohesion dynamic.

Connected as a breath awareness, realize how nourishment in the form of liquid is taken in (the many actions in the ‘one’ or self). Acknowledge the flow and passing liquid presence. Experience how conditions, pressures, influences and elements arise as liquid actions. Acknowledge the present moment fluidity pulsing. Liquid moistens and gives the overall affect of the ‘one’ body. Follow how liquid enters through the mouth and goes on to be absorbed into the body. The liquid circulates to bring vitality to the entire physiology. Aware of the passing pressures, sensations and feelings, liquid is affected as an impermanent union of actions.

Wisely Reflecting, a Middle Way appreciation for impermanence becomes clear. Recognize the discernable changes in blood, saliva, urine, mucous and sweat affecting you. Impermanence is action related, arising and fading. Feel how your attention focuses, absorbs and grasps to deal with the liquid action. Attached to the liquid dynamic as a self-deception, suffering consequences are experienced.

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All liquid elements both within and externally are Wisely Reflected as impermanent. Feel how awareness for a one-sided, self-view is released to a discerning recognition. As a Middle Way appreciation, one stops measuring and being defined by a body/mind identification and turns away from a flawed, incomplete, and out of touch misunderstanding (the drive to fulfill sensual desires, the drive to fulfill craving for existence, driven by mistaking life as self). Disenchanted, you detach from the liquid element.

A clarifying realization, the true nature of life and reality are experienced—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self impersonal nature underscored by purposeful action.

I feel how the liquid dynamic circulates and affects me. When I first sit to meditate there is a strong pulsation and rush. Insight Meditation allows me to settle and appreciate these passing pressures.

March 16—The Temperature (heat/cold) Dynamic*

“When he dies...the fire returns and goes back to the body of fire...” MN 76

Temperature (heat)—Every material form possesses some degree of temperature. Unlike the other three forces, the temperature dynamic has the power to regenerate matter. Impermanence’s fluctuating friction thrives to make for hot and cold temperatures. One is born warm with active energy then over time slowly goes cold as physical energies dissipate. The Temperature Dynamic connects as an awareness of life-action as phenomena. Noted are the active conditions and actions as impermanence is discerned.

Feel the temperature dynamic within you. Acknowledge the vitality and energy—the warmth of the breath entering then the oxygen circulating. The body behaves like a stoked furnace. Note the warmth under clothing and at the forehead. The extremities of nose, finger tips, and toes feel cool. Note the temperature in the atmosphere. Acknowledge sweating when warm or shivering when cold. Note the cooler exposed body parts of face and hands. The temperature dynamic is never the same, but registers external conditions and actions. Follow how you respond to temperature. When too hot one is lethargic and even grumpy while when cold there is a general weakness and being prone to sickness. Realize impermanence in the environment and climate temperatures.

Connected as a breath awareness, realize temperature as energy (the many actions in the ‘one’ or self) is absorbed. The breath temperature circulates to bring energy as oxygen to the entire body. Aware of the passing pressures, sensations and feelings, temperature is an impermanent union of actions.

Wisely Reflecting, a Middle Way appreciation for impermanence becomes clear. As a passing of discernable hot and cold changes impermanence arises out of actions and then fades. Feel how the mind focuses, absorbs and grasps to deal with the temperature actions. You are attached to the temperature dynamic through a self-deception, leading to suffering consequences.

All temperature elements both within and externally are Wisely Reflected on as impermanent. Feel how awareness for a one-sided, self-view is released to a discerning recognition. As a Middle Way appreciation, one stops measuring and being defined by a body/mind identification and turns away from a flawed, incomplete, and out of touch misunderstanding (the drive to fulfill sensual desires, the drive to fulfill craving for existence, driven by mistaking life as self). Disenchanted, you detach from the temperature element.

A clarifying realization, the true nature of life and reality are experienced—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self impersonal nature underscored by purposeful action.

Sitting here I feel cool, relaxed and comfortable. When I'm active my temperature rises and I perspire. The Temperature Dynamic reflects my activity level.

March 17—The Motion (space/air) Dynamic*

“When he dies...the air [element] returns and goes back to the body of air...”
MN 76

Sitting, feel the pressures of the air dynamic. The breath enters the body to fill and disperse oxygen. Follow the subtle inhaled motion dynamic as oxygen circulates and the diaphragm expands to draw in air. The heart then disperses the oxygen through the blood. The warm blood flows as a life-action. The Motion Dynamic connects as an awareness of consciousness for actions. Noted are the passing pressures and sensations as impermanence is discerned.

Like blowing on an ember, movement and stimulation is produced through the air dynamic while the motion in turn generates temperature. The air element is produced by motion and the reason that all material particles are in a state of vibration, flux and action. Motion and temperature together account for the energy that stimulates and stirs life.

Settled through a body scan centering, acknowledge the subtle air pressures felt in the body. As a breath awareness, follow the air and space elements arising and fading with each breath. The lungs draw in air through the nostrils, air then travels through the windpipe and down into the lungs as oxygen is absorbed into the blood stream and courses through the body. Sensitive and aware, feel the absorbed air circulating.

Connected as a breath awareness, realize the motion dynamic (the many actions in the ‘one’ or self). Experience how conditions, pressures, influences, and elements arise as charged air. Follow as the breath enters through the nostrils, touches the back of the throat, facial muscles stretching and sinuses expanding, and then the diaphragm lifts and lower abdomen draws in. Pumped by the heart muscle, the breath’s circulating oxygen brings vital energy to the entire body. Aware of the passing pressures, sensations and feelings, the air as motion is affected as an impermanent union of actions.

Wisely Reflecting, a Middle Way appreciation for impermanence becomes clear. The passing of discernable air-motion as a charged breath. Impermanence arises out of actions and then fades. Feel how the mind focuses, absorbs and grasps to

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deal with air/space actions. Attached to the air dynamic through a self-deception, suffering consequences are experienced.

All motion elements both within and externally are Wisely Reflected as impermanent. Feel how awareness for a one-sided, self-view is released to a discerning recognition. As a Middle Way appreciation, one stops measuring and being defined by a body/mind identification and turns away from a flawed, incomplete, and out of touch misunderstanding (the drive to fulfill sensual desires, the drive to fulfill craving for existence, driven by mistaking life as self). Disenchanted, you detach from the motion element.

A clarifying realization, the true nature of life and reality are experienced—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self impersonal nature underscored by purposeful action.

I feel how my breath charges me. Air is inhaled then expelled. I recognize, too, the space and pause between breaths. Motion arises and fades.

March 18—The Worldly Ways and Impermanence*

***“Gain, loss, fame and ill fame,
Blame, praise, happiness and sorrow,
Impermanent are these things among men.
Not lasting but subject to change.” AN 4***

Centered around a flawed, self-deception are how the worldly ways affect one. Through the ups and downs of gain/loss, fame/dishonor, praise/blame, happiness/pain, life’s tug-of-war or vicissitudes are experienced.

Gain/loss—As a self-centered pride, gain is a conceit and arrogance, but this is short-lived and inevitably gives way to loss. Self-illusion is deceiving and undermining.

Not only are there material gains and losses, but emotional and personal losses as well. Gain gratifies the self-image, then just as quickly the moment and events change to be unsettling. There are degrees of loss from outright anger and sadness to overwhelming despair. However, Wise Reflecting responsibility is taken for one’s actions. A deeper insight for life comes into focus.

Putting things into perspective, the Middle Way appreciation is a personal intuition for life’s challenges and how to realistically deal with the short-comings. Adversity is met with patience, goodwill as a Wise Reflection and the Five Wise Actions applied. Glimpsed are the underlying habit tendencies affecting life.

Fame/dishonor—Fame feeds a self-illusion and what inevitably follows is a downfall. Someone is always going to feel left out, disappointed or upset.

Fame is intoxicating to a self-image while dishonor is an attack and setback to everything one stands for. Wise Actions expose subconscious intentions. Everything thought said and done is underscored by purposeful actions as either carelessly or responsibly intended. In the pursuit of approval, self-obsessed is reflected. Negative reactions go on to reveal dormant, active and transgressing greed, hatred and confusing habits. In turn these lead to detrimental actions.

Praise/blame—Praise inflates a self-view while blame crushes a personal image. Praise is soothing and welcomed while blame is a hostility to be avoided. The self

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actor is deceptive and calculating, seeking comfortable situations while avoiding negative feedback and challenges.

Happiness/pain—Short-term creature comforts are seducing while spurring further desire, but setbacks and disappointments are inevitable.

Throughout daily exchanges and encounters, the pendulum swings from gratifying and indulgent to difficult and disarming. People are prone to anger and jealousy when not getting their way. There is disappointment, upset, fear and worry as when not pleased.

The Five Wise Actions help one cope with life's ups and downs. Exchanged is hatred for goodwill, stinginess or theft for generosity, lying for honesty, lust for compassion, and drug and alcohol use for sobriety. The present moment is an honest recognition of life's ups and downs. A Middle Way appreciation directs one to a fulfillment removed from self-deception. Awareness, patience, Wise Reflection and applying the Five Wise Actions, prevent the worldly ways down turn.

Relaxed and settling into the meditation, disengage from everyday events and the many distracting preoccupations. Acknowledge the breath's quality. Body, feelings, mind and life-actions are a present connection. Centered on the breath quality, distinguish the self-related physical tension and mental restlessness. Follow the ongoing communication between the body and mind. Gently relax and release the one-sided, self-reactions. Feel as self-accumulated habits begin to disperse. Self-identification has one lost and confused.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact the breath quality is followed; Sustained Contact physical activity settles; Interest notes how the attention is distracted by worldly events; 'Joy' as the mind and attention slowly clear; and having One-Pointed Clarity is a present recognition for life without self-intrusions.

Wise Reflecting and through a Middle Way appreciation, there is more to life than self-obsession.

I'm bounced about by the worldly ways, but meditation as a steadying awareness allows me to understand myself. I realize how my self-fixation and pursuits undermine my life.

March 19—The Three Conditioned Realms and the Unconditioned, Nirvana*

“Here someone being himself subject to birth, having understood the danger in what is subject to birth, seeks the unborn supreme security from bondage, Nirvana; being himself subject to aging...sickness...death...sorrow...defilement he seeks the undefiled supreme security from bondage, Nirvana.” MN 26

Impermanence implies action and life is generated through multiple ongoing actions (the many actions giving the illusion of the ‘one’ or self). There are three conditioned life-action realms. While some worlds are longer lived, they all succumb to the same arising and fading impermanent forces and consequences. Life can very well move from one world to another within these three realms—the Sense Conditioned Realm (dominated by the senses and physical contact), the Fine-Material Conditioned Realm (a weakening of the senses and keener concentrated awareness), and the Immaterial Conditioned Realm (pure, formless psychic energy). All three conditioned worlds are underscored by purposeful action, having their own refined conscious awareness or concentrated absorption. As a useful concentration technique and recognition for these realms, their conscious awareness as meditations will be detailed in future months (But the Conditions Arising causes and effects of each is impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self impersonal nature underscored by purposeful action.).

There is a fourth Unconditioned Realm or Ultimate Reality, Nirvana, free of the turbulent forces of impermanence and habitually promoted actions. Nirvana (detailed in December) is a supreme, unfabricated freed state without craving, self-domination or misperception. To know and experience the breakthrough to Nirvana one first must be rid of all self-associated greed, hatred and confusion as well as the body/mind self-identification. The Middle Way threefold path of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom is followed to Nirvana.

The Sense Conditioned Realm

The Sense Conditioned Realm is the most tormenting and suffering of the three Conditioned Realms. Dominated by sensually sought after impressions, physical gratification and fulfillment are sought out leaving one dissatisfied and disillusioned. A struggle for survival persists through 10 carelessly charged habits (the Middle Way connects you to 10 wise actions).

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Ironically, birth as a human being in the Sense Realm is a favorable combination of pleasure and pain, allowing for insight on life. It is as humans that Stream-Entry passage to liberation takes place. Fortunately, there is no 'eternal hell' or damnation as nothing is permanent. No matter how long it may take, all beings and creatures have the potential to better their situation and lives.

The Fine-Material Conditioned Realm

In this realm varying degrees of detachment from sense pleased pursuits and meditative concentration are enjoyed. In the highest recognition, the body exists as a material flux while mental distractions are calmed through deeper revealing absorptions. But again everything is impermanent and has the characteristic of being dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and is of a non-self nature.

The Immaterial Conditioned Realm

The inhabitants here are possessed entirely of pure psychic energy devoid of physical form and sensual experiences. An existence of concentrated-mental bliss is achieved. Having no physical body, the beings here are unable to absorb further realizations or wisdom. The higher meditative formless absorptions are distinguished. Though longer lived, everything is impermanent and has the characteristic of being dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and is of a non-self nature.

It is important to note that a universal theory isn't emphasized, but rather highlighted is purposeful action and how willed actions as either careless and impulsive or aware and responsible, determining how life is experienced. You don't have to be a victim of self-centered attachments. There is also patience, compassion, Wise Reflection and the Five Wise Actions as guidance.

Through Insight Meditation and a Middle Way appreciation the three realms are confidently known and understood. When first sitting one is distracted and unsettled. All this comes about from charged sense-contacted activities and reactions. Connecting with the breath's quality, begin to wind down from all the sensual involvement. Relaxed, you are aware both physically and mentally of impermanence's affects. This is the Sense Conditioned Realm.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact appreciates the breath's quality; Sustained Contact follows how sense-contacted feelings are stirred; Interest realizes the mental state; 'Joy' relaxes the mind; and having One-Pointed Clarity impermanence's role is revealed as passing and of a non-self nature.

Sitting and settling down, a Middle Way appreciation directs one away from self-complications. Subconscious habits are discerned. Life reflects the same dynamics affecting the world and the universe at large. Awareness Focusing as concentration

along with Wise Reflection and the Five Wise Actions lead to a settled, less physically dominated and detached Fine-Material clarity.

The Immaterial Realm experience discerns how self-conceit ties one to a persisting self-identified mental obsession.

The moments when meditating, feeling as though time has stopped and all self-identification has abated, is a rare and short-lived glimpse into the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana.

I settle to recognize how my actions lead me around. I fall victim and suffer accordingly. I appreciate my breath and notice my thoughts.

March 20—Impermanence as Salvation*

“For one who remains focused on the impermanence of all fabrications, ignorance is abandoned, clear knowing arises.” IT 80

By now you are wondering and seriously asking, what do all these far out notions and world systems have to do with you? This all sounds like a lot of mumbo-jumbo. You just try to fit in some meditation time and get a little peace and quiet in your life. But don't take things for granted. Look deeper. There are many things going on behind the scenes in your 'innocent' life.

Take a look around. Conflicts and military actions are raging somewhere in the world. This is closer to the Hell Realm. Monte Carlo, Las Vegas and Atlantic City and now Indian reservation gaming casinos cater to the temptation of gambling and vice. Washington DC, Beijing, Moscow, Berlin, London, Tokyo and other capitals are the corridors for power and corruption. Pornography is connected with Hollywood and other locales as an attachment to the Sense Realm. Some Third World countries largest producing crops are drug related because they are kept out of the fringes of economic development by the industrial nations. Look at the animal world, plant life, and physical universe. Each speaks for itself, the type of energy generated and the role of purposeful action.

Take a look at yourself prior to starting Insight Meditation—careless and impulsive, dominated by deep-seated desires. Impermanence shouldn't be taken for granted, but rather through a present awareness purposeful action is realized—both careless and wise. In one's own way hell and suffering have been known, but now are leading a stable, responsible life of Wise Action. Awareness and meditative insight have deepened. The Middle Way appreciation and insight to impermanence works in one's favor as life is properly understood. Suffering does end when one is aware and wise. Wisely Reflecting, self-related actions are slowly undone.

There is no 'big bang' awakening, but rather a series of personally experienced and accumulated insightful connections. Change works to your benefit when discerning life. Steered away from are hypothetical issues, this is where Right Questioning and Wise Reflection come into play as a personal understanding and insight. A Middle Way appreciation is followed to liberation and suffering's end. Don't reject anything outright.

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The world is viewed through an incomplete, unrealistic and out of touch misunderstanding (the drive to fulfill sensual desires, the drive to fulfill craving for existence, driven by mistaking life as self). The conditioned worlds are dominated by impermanence and self-centered actions, but there is the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm (Nirvana) yet to be penetrated.

Note how the Three Poisons dominate. As a breath awareness, note the stress, tension and pressure in the body as well as the mind (the two communicating and mirroring the present state). Take a few deep breaths through the nose to settle down and be composed. Gently begin to release the compounded stress. Sense how you cling as a self actor (facial muscles taut or abdomen clenched as well as how thoughts tensely narrow). Feel the dispersing of the habitual impulses of greed, hatred and confusion.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact as awareness for the present breath's quality; Sustained Contact notes physical stress as well as how the mind is affected; Interest as tension is slowly relaxed and released; 'Joy' follows impermanence's passing; and having One-Pointed Clarity as insight is experienced for impermanence's arising and passing.

Wisely Reflecting, life is accurately discerned. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation are about awareness and to better understand and live life. Only as a self actor is one greedy, hateful and confused. As a mindful person insight for life is known. Impermanence works in your favor when wisely connected.

With so much going on in my life, I feel overwhelmed and confused. But meditation directs me to seeing and experiencing life without self-judgment. Now I'm understanding.

March 21—Understanding as a Goodwill and Compassion*

“I will protect myself establishing awareness and practicing awareness; by practicing patience, harmlessness, loving kindness and sympathy...I protect others.” SN 5, 47, (19) 9

A stressful and demanding life, goodwill and compassion are needed and regularly called upon. There can be ranting and raging over challenging instances and conflicts or dealing through patience and goodwill.

Settled as a meditative awareness, open and relax. Slowly begin to release the built up habitual energy (greed, hatred and confusion). Note how the breath is stressed from habitually dominating impulses. Sense the stickiness, the stretching in transformation, the pulling apart and the fading.

At this moment, there is nothing demanding other than this present experience. As a Middle Way appreciation, the self-extremes for indulgence and aggression are redirected. Wisely Reflect on the conflicts stirring inside: breath strained, tension at the forehead and behind the eyes, clenching the jaw, throat tightened, shoulders and back muscles hunched up, chest pressured as well as abdominal and pelvic tension. Take a few deep breaths to defuse the tension, allowing the accumulated stress to weaken and flow out. The tension and near strangulation felt as a self actor dominates as mood swings. The mind follows to quiet down and detach from self-promoted habits. Acknowledge the settling benefit of Insight Meditation along with the Middle Way appreciation.

Following the breath awareness, slowly sense how the affecting energy passes on and flows out. Connected with the ongoing thoughts, begin to understand how habits arise, play out and are impermanent. Release the charged physical and mental disturbances. Through a Middle Way appreciation fighting stops and insight is gleaned. Overwhelmed by pressured feelings, one is careless and neglectful, quick to anger and lash out. Now connected as a true awareness and understanding, life is experienced as so many conditions arising rather than self-obsessed.

Now acknowledge patience’s role and goodwill’s abiding giving way to insight. One may feel anger when challenged but now, too, Wise Action is realized. Feel the gradual shift, release and benefit that meditation allows. All of life is revealed in the

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course of the breath—self-dominated and careless or as a Wise Reflection and directed by Wise Action. Experience the Middle Way recognition detached from self extremes.

Cultivating the meditation of goodwill, ill-will is abandoned. Through compassion, cruelty is abandoned. Knowing gratitude, resentment is abandoned. Being patient and equanimous, impatience and irritability are abandoned. Cultivating the awareness for impermanence, sensual passions are slowly abandoned. Wise Reflection joins to reveal life and reality as they truly are. Dormant, active or transgressing habits are controlled. There is already too much pain in the world. Goodwill and compassion are needed.

My awareness directs me from impulsiveness and carelessness to patience, compassion, and understanding. I'm now better connected with my life.

March 22—Wise Reflection*

“A person who attends appropriately abandons what is unskillful and develops what is skillful...nothing else does so much for attaining the superlative goal.” IT 80

Monkey Mind distractions creep in when bored and unaware. Dormant, active and transgressing habits follow to cloud the experience. Greed, hatred and confusion are acted on. Not understanding life a threefold misunderstanding forms—mistaking the impermanent to be permanent, the dissatisfying to be satisfying and the non-self to be self. Awareness intensifying as Wise Reflection, recognize how self-obsession warps reality. Wise Reflection is a personal intuition for the body, feelings, mind and life-action experiences. Directed to less suffering, follow as insight for one’s life and reality forms.

Gently follow the breath’s quality as a Middle Way appreciation devoid of self extremes. Acknowledge the shift from a distracted Monkey Mind to a clear-minded and settled present recognition. Here life is experienced as it is—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and as a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Wisely Reflecting, a self-deception dominates life—the drive to fulfill sensual desire, the drive to fulfill craving for existence, driven by mistaking life as self.

The Four Dynamic Forces make for the patterns experienced here in the Sense Conditioned Realm. Acknowledge the body-like solid element, the feeling-like liquid element, the mental-like air space element, and the life-action temperature-like element. Misunderstanding stands out as a body/mind self-illusion. Feel the burden and confusion as moment after moment self is at odds and gropes to cope. In denial, a conflicting friction arises and suffering takes place. Note how habitual urgency leads one to suffering.

The subconscious revealed, acknowledge how dormant, active and transgressing greedy, hateful and confusing motives arise to cloud the mind as a self-deception distorts reality. Follow how the breath begins to change and stress disperse. Slowly mental confusion is clarified by Wise Reflection. Realized are the conditioned actions causes and effects joining to give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self. Actions are sticky, stretch in transformation, go on to pull apart and fade. Follow the clear recognition to realize how deep seated impulses carry over to suffering.

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All my problems are self-related. Through Insight Meditation and the Middle Way I connect as a Wise Reflection to know my life.

March 23—Wise Reflection for Sense Contacts*

***“Clinging to sensuality, to sensual ties,
seeing no blame in the fetter,
never will those tied up in the fetter
cross over the flood so great and wide.” UD 7, 3***

Actions and activities related to and follow the six senses and stirred impressions (eyes/form, ears/sounds, nose/smell, tongue/taste, tactile/touch and mind/thoughts). At every moment, instance, encounter and experience one is aroused, put upon and overwhelmed by sense stimulation and associated impressions. Self-expressed greed, hatred and confusion play out to a complete physical and mental break down.

Meditating, follow the conscious recognition for how actions are expressed. The eyes rely on light and objects; the ears rely on sound vibration; the tongue relies on flavor; the nose relies on odors and scents; skin relies on tactile stimulation, and the mind relies on actions in general as a conscious identification. All are generated by so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements; the many actions give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self. Arising and fading, the seen, the heard, the tasted, the smelled, the touched, and conscious action (the mind) are impermanent.

Establishing Wise Reflection, realize the role of purposeful action. The senses are stimulated and carelessly indulged as life is defined by self-habits. The subconscious is revealed. Discern how a self-obsession goes on to make-up your life story. Wisely Reflecting, there is insight for life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self impersonal nature underscored by purposeful action.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact as awareness for a particular sense contact; Sustained Contact notes how the sense impression arises; Interest as Wise Reflection for the action as impermanent; ‘Joy’ follows discerning the moment without indulging in self-reactions; and having One-Pointed Clarity is insight for the many actions in the ‘one.’

A life time of indulging, sense reactions and identification aren’t easily given up. But now Wisely Reflecting I direct myself to Wise Action.

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March 24—Like the Elements*

“Unresentful like the earth...” DH 95

The four great elements are a selfless metaphor. Earth, water, fire and wind are unaffected, without judgment, unsoiled and resilient. So too should one strive for these unassuming and unpretentious characteristics. Without self-identification and conceit, you are unflappable and unperturbed, aspiring to humility and selflessness. Compassion, patience, acceptance, forgiveness and perseverance are expressed.

Whatever is done to the earth, thrown upon it or however it may be polluted, so too is one without revulsion, loathing or disgust towards anything or anyone. If confronted or receiving hostility, you are mindful, restrained, not offended, and equanimous.

As the fire element is unaffected and burns equally and evenly, so too is one without revulsion, loathing, or disgust towards anything or anyone. Without self-motivation arises to react out of greed, hatred or confusion, you are ever vigilant, responsible and unperturbed.

As the water elements washes over undisturbed, so too is one without revulsion, loathing or disgust towards anything or anyone. Presently mindful, one isn't offended or gives into greed, hatred or confusion. There is awareness, restraint, and responsibility for one's actions.

As the wind element blows unhindered, so too is one without revulsion, loathing or disgust towards anything or anyone. You carry on and move easily irregardless of the challenge or obstacle, patient and undeterred.

Unaffected, one is without judgment and beyond self-obsession. The world at large is pervaded with goodwill, compassion, shared joy and equanimity—exalted, immeasurable, without hostility and without ill-will. Everything and everyone is equally embraced. It is the self actor who lashes out, fights, argues, recoils, is bitter, unforgiving and spiteful. Life is experienced without self-delusion.

The quieter I become, I lose track of my self-inspired ways. I find myself open, patient and accepting. I have no reason to quarrel or fight.

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Life Practice

March 25—The Present Moment as Turning Point*

Don't be discouraged or feel overwhelmed by the deeper implications of impermanence or the affect of compounded conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Be focused and concerned with only the present to be responsible for your actions. Knowingly engaged, awareness and insight are a Wise Reflection detouring one from suffering impulses. Realistically, one can only do so much. This is where patience, renunciation and restraint come into play as well as a bit of humor to laugh, not take things so seriously and shrug things off.

Acknowledge the struggle with impermanence and changes in general. Attached, in denial, short-tempered, a self-associated inconvenience, one is at odds. Not accepting sickness, aging and in denial of death, there is dissatisfaction. Still upset about a relationship or ongoing family situation, there is bitterness and resentment. Don't deny or ignore the present, but rather understand and learn from life experiences. Impermanence works in one's favor when wisely connected to release and allow the moment to pass on. Acknowledge the breath's quality and mental state, then relax to release the stress. Realizing impermanence, life is viewed without self-perception. A Middle Way appreciation directs you to a discerning, personal experience.

The Five Remembrances clarify the truth about life and how everyone is inevitably affected. Wrong doing, corruption and tragedies, acknowledge sympathy to feel for victims and their loss. You are better prepared to deal with the unexpected rather than overwhelmed and surprised by it. Wisely Reflecting, control is known for careless, self-driven intentions to awareness and responsibility as Wise Action.

Impermanence is realized: a fallen tree, plants or flowers wilted, an old building torn down, the morning cold then warming, unexpected news about a family member or friend, seeing an aged person shuffling along as well as insight for one's own personal challenges. Noted are the arising, stickiness, stretching in transformation, pulling apart and fading affecting all life.

Knowing change and watching over my actions, I don't react as a self-actor but am wisely connected.

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March 26—The Challenge to be Wise*

Impermanence is a challenge. Thoughts, speech and actions are undermined by dormant, active and transgressing habitual tendencies. Even a private pleasure or reward becomes a cause of stress as the moment slips away. As change takes place, mindfully follow the transition and how the ongoing challenge disperses. Feel how impermanence is unsettling. Slowing down through Insight Meditation, a Middle Way appreciation is followed. Wise Reflection now distinguishes life's deeper characteristics. Follow the breath's recognition leading to discernment for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. An insight experience for life's true nature is realized.

Recognize how greed as desire, hatred as anger, and doubt as confusion are a self-related obsession. Often one is one's own worst enemy and like a child rants, rages and indignantly walks out. As a present awareness, feel as patience emerges. Patience in turn connects with Wise Reflection. Wisely Reflecting life is discerned, impermanence known, and Wise Action applied.

The Five Wise Actions are a peaceful guideline: goodwill curbs aggression and hatred; generosity opens caring and sharing; truthfulness is an honest communication; compassion and abstinence curb carnal desires; and sober, responsible clear-minded understanding for life is realized.

Living wisely and responsibly, note the disenchantment for worldly passions and involvements. A realistic vision and understanding stands out. Recognize the patterns and actions running through life. As a quiet joy, confidence and peaceful abiding, one isn't distracted, careless or distracted by boredom. Wisely Reflecting, life is improved. The suffering that is part of impermanence now isn't as overwhelming.

Meditating and calming down, I'm aware of where I am, what is happening and how I become involved. Wisely Reflecting, I engage in Wise Action.

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March 27—Arising and Fading*

In the course of a breath, impermanence is reflected as arising, sticky, stretching in transformation, pulling apart and fading. Everything is in a state of agitation and affected by changing dynamics. The body, feelings, mind, and life-actions are impermanent. Connected to the breath's quality and ongoing thoughts, discerned is the present moment as it truly is.

The breath begins as a mindful recognition for impermanence. The body is pressured, feelings are experienced, the mind reacts and life-action is engaged. Follow as a breath is taken, oxygen is distributed, then a pause as the breath is exhaled. One can be overwhelmed as a self actor and react carelessly, or Wisely Reflecting following a Middle Way appreciation to realize life's true nature.

As a situation or experience strikes, feel how pressures and circumstances go on to play out. The Four Dynamics charge one as physical, liquid, temperature and motion pressures. The moment arises as a conditioned impression through so many actions. There is a stickiness, stretching in transformation and pulling apart. The moment then goes on to fade. As short-lived instances, note how you personally react—whether impulsive as a self actor or aware through a Middle Way appreciation.

Wisely Reflecting, life is realized. A child becomes a teenager, reaches middle age and then is a senior citizen. A day begins cold then warms. A river floods with rainfall in the winter but recedes in the summer. The earth, the planets, everyone and everything, are affected by impermanence and purposeful action.

Change comes at the work place and in relationships, but worldly ways don't have dominate. In the morning you made all the lights to work, in the evening you are stuck in commuter grid lock. Acknowledge the breath's quality and mental states to connect with patience and realize impermanence rather than reacting out of habit as a self actor. Conditions and influences join briefly then ebb and come undone. Revealed is purposeful action.

As an insight experience and recognition, relax from your self-defining ways. Rather than rage and cry over the inevitable or live in denial, now patience, goodwill and compassion are expressed. The self actor only knows suffering.

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Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact follows the present breath quality; Sustained Contact identifies the changing breath quality; Interest notes the mental state; 'Joy' Wisely Reflects on the moment; and having One-Pointed Clarity, Wise Action is engaged.

Conscious of my breath and mind, I feel how impermanence pressures me. Not as easily affected or provoked, I'm aware and go on to act wisely.

March 28—Purposeful Action*

Impermanence and the changes affecting life are seen not as mortality, but rather as purposeful action. Wisely Reflecting, recognize how impulses and motives charge life.

Clouding life and leading to suffering consequences is a self-involved grand illusion: the drive to fulfill sensual desire, the drive to fulfill craving for existence, driven by mistaking life as self. Misunderstanding in turn leads to act out self-promoted habits (greed, hatred and confusion) expressed as careless thoughts, speech and actions. Through a Middle Way appreciation, experience life without self-intrusion.

Meditating, discerned are the subtle changes and life-actions. The habitual buildup disperses. Insight for the many actions in the 'one' stands out as conditions, pressures, influences and elements. As passing impermanence, the Four Dynamic Forces plays out. Aging is nothing but change. The changes are realized of illness, death, loss and life-actions in general. Note how actions arise, transform and fade. Purposeful action underscores life.

Feel how one-sided impulses are a handicap. Direct awareness to physical stress and mental distractions. Note how the body and mind communicate and reflect impermanence's affects. Acknowledge how pressures go on to charge life. Follow as the mind narrows and searches for convenient solutions.

Breathe deeply. Relax and follow the awareness. Wisely Reflecting, release the disturbing turmoil. Feel how you struggle to cope with change. Keeping an open mind, don't fall into exaggerated judgments. A Middle Way appreciation joins to recognize purposeful action. Slowly release the habit buildup. Follow the arising and fading of conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Note impermanence as sticky, stretching in transformation, pulling apart and fading.

Change also works to one's benefit when aware and wisely connected. This is where Wise Reflection comes in to play. A Middle Way appreciation directs you to ending self-promoted suffering.

I see how I respond to change and make things worse by my careless choices. Wisely Reflecting, I understand life and now better deal with situations and experiences.

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March 29—Wise Reflection Leads to Wise Action*

While impermanence can seem random and chaotic, one does have a say in life. Wise Reflection brings connects as an actively applied Wise Action. Life is slowly revealed and clarified through the present breath recognition.

Settled through a body scan, feel the shift away from the self actor urgency and Monkey Mind distractions. Presently centered, life and reality are appreciated. Acknowledge the spaciousness and relief from self-driven compulsions. Feel as the habitual accumulation disperses and the self-demanding nature fades. Not only charged as a self actor, through Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation dropped are impulsive and careless self-defined ways.

Habits like a fog blur life's true nature—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Settling down, affirm the Five Remembrances for sickness, aging, death, loss and responsible action. Straight forward and candid, the Remembrances are an honest recollection.

Now aware of thoughts, speech and actions, begin to discern the purposeful action behind life in general. Nothing happens without your willing it to be. The subconscious revealed, you are better able to beneficially and compassionately direct actions. Wisely engaged, the Five Wise Actions of goodwill, generosity, honesty, compassion and sobriety are applied. Wisely Reflecting, acknowledge the release from self-driven impulses and Monkey Mind distractions as understanding to better live life.

Meditation centers and settles me. My life has slowed, is manageable and enjoyable. I'm better aware of what I'm doing and where I'm headed.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

March 30—Dealing with Challenges*

Not everything demands a response. Now wisely connected one is better able to deal with life. Unless sirens are screeching, smoke is pouring out a window, or someone is calling for help, then you really don't have to be caught up by a demanding stressed-filled life. Worldly pursuits are taxing and lead to suffering consequences. The Middle Way cuts through extreme reactions. Wise Reflection is both a moderation and understanding. Having renunciation and restraint, one isn't overwhelmed and provoked by desire.

Bring a calm and mindful attention to the body, feelings, mind and life-action experiences. Follow how conditions arise. Note the sticky, stretching in transformation, the pulling apart and fading that is impermanent action. Much of life is spent in counter productive responses, dominated by dormant, active and transgressing instincts. Thoughts, speech and actions are ruled by a self-misperception and false sense of identity. Note the attachment and struggle with a moment or situation. The event can be long over with and yet you still go on being resentful. This is how the self actor unwittingly suffers. Worldly ways dominate as gain/loss, fame/infamy, praise/blame, happiness/pain. Purposeful action is revealed as having far reaching consequences. Now Wisely Reflect to follow Wise Action.

The Middle Way appreciation is calm and intuitive rather than impulsive, indulging and aggressive. Acknowledge the realization beyond a self-limited view and habitual domination. Knowing impermanence, don't give to the first impulse. Through goodwill, generosity, honesty, compassion and sobriety, renunciation and restraint are applied. Greed, hatred and confusion are controlled. Wise Reflection is a practical and personal insight. Slowly detach from the self-obsession. Impermanence is a challenge because life is misunderstood. Following a Middle Way appreciation life is known without self-domination. Habits dispersing, acknowledge how Insight Meditation forms as a One-Pointed Clarity and realization for life without self-intrusion.

So much of my life has been a blur, but now an understanding is forming. I'm less confused and see where my actions are taking me.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

March 31—Knowing Impermanence*

Be accepting of the inevitable whether it be divorce, taxes or death! Wisely Reflecting, direct actions away from greed, hatred and confusion. A relationship or marriage which has struggled is better ended and for both parties to amicably go their way. Stuck in debt, renunciation to a simpler and humble life is needed. Rather than looking at death as a finale, realize the arising and fading of many actions as a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action.

Take responsibility for your life. Self-obsession leads to suffering. Worldly ways are marked by careless, impulsive intentions. There are better, positive and constructive ways to deal with impermanence's unsettling and challenges. Before one cursed and fought, but now patience and goodwill arise. If someone is aggressive, calmly channel the moment without incident rather than exploding into an argument or hostility. Being responsible, you better help yourself and the other party. Allow things to resolve naturally without provocation. Wise Action reflects Insight Meditation as a transforming experience. Acknowledge impermanence and its passing without self-reaction.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact acknowledges the present breath quality; Sustained Contact connects with the challenging moment; Interest notes the mental stress to have patience; 'Joy' is a Wise Reflection for goodwill; and having One-Pointed Clarity impermanence is known.

Note the impermanence in the little things that normally go unnoticed. All arise, are sticky, stretch in transformation, pull apart and go on to fade. Mistaking life and reality as self, you suffer. Awareness, Wise Reflection and Wise Action, along with a Middle Way appreciation, life's true nature is revealed.

There's no escaping impermanence. But how I react to the experiences is my doing—careless or wise. There's more to life than my one-sided habits



*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

APRIL— The Makings of Self and Non-self Freedom



Living in a changing and imperfect world, already half the answer is known—life is impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering. The Five Remembrances affirm life as it is: there is sickness, aging, death, loss of loved ones and possessions, all directed by actions leaving one unfulfilled. Now what does this imply about you as a person? The insight into non-self is challenging because of the mistaken notions and strong attachment one has as self-identification.

The body/mind association of the many actions joining to give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self, are correctly recognized as the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. A ‘heap’ of collected factors or a Humpty Dumpty-like pieced together—body, feelings, perception, mental reactions, and conscious attention (material form and four related mental aspects), make-up the self-actor or person.

Amazingly, this body/mind connection is brought about by charged motives, having literally willed one’s self to be the person you are (karma, the thought before the thought or action is detailed in May). Non-self defines life and reality as they are—empty of any core or unique being or individual self-characteristic or identity, but rather the many actions joining to give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self. As conditions, pressures, influences and elements, everything in life and this world is made up of short-lived, thriving action-moments connected by wholesome and beneficial or unwholesome and detrimental purposeful action. Intentions as purposeful action go on to manifest the direction life takes as well as how future consequences play out.

Take a closer look. How special a person do you think you are? Parents, schooling, friends, culture and personal experiences, all come together to form the self actor

role now played out. Wisely Reflecting discerning life, appreciate and experience how the many conditions come together giving the illusion of the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. There is nothing that stands out as soul, individual or self. Yes, there is a person but a non-self collection of experiences generated and following purposeful action, pulsing and changing at every instant. For example, the next time visiting a lake or the ocean try looking at them not as 'one' body of water, but as the reality of many drops generated by unique conditions, pressures, influences and elements, forming the illusion of the 'one.' The same as a person, body/mind associated actions make-up a self-illusion. Life has been experienced from a limited self-view without discerning the deeper non-self reality.

However, 'no self' is mistaking and not taking into account the far reaching implications of impermanence, and is an extreme version of self and relates to life as coming from nothing and ending in nothing (Remember the paradox of impermanence is that for there to be 'one' there are always two or more actions or factors.). Cynical and skeptical, 'no self' is a deluded and twisted self-misunderstanding. If there were a self then one would command to not be sick, age or die, and dictate to be happy and never suffer. But such isn't the case. There is non-self, a body/mind collection of compounded actions making for a self-illusion.

As a personal intuition, the Middle Way appreciation clarifies the self-hoax (for desire, existence and mistaking life as self). There is an actual sticky quality to impermanence and a clinging burden to the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Routinely under siege by change, literally physically pulled apart, there are also mental and emotional challenges. Disturbed and struggling, suffering is experienced. Driven by subconscious dormant, but also active and transgressing habits, craving for a body/mind self-identity carries over to future consequences. Linking the past, present and future, self-promoted habits play out. Through Insight Meditation follow the true, non-self nature of life and reality—the many actions in the 'one' or self.

April 1—The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (Body, Feelings, Perception, Mental Reactions and Conscious Attention)*

“A run-of-the-mill person...assumes form [body] to be the self, or the self as possessing form, or form as in the self, or the self as in form...assumes feelings...assumes perception...assumes mental reactions...assumes conscious attention to be self.

“He gets attached to form, clings to form, and determines it to be ‘my self.’ He gets attached to feeling...He gets attached to perception...He gets attached to [mental] fabrications...He gets attached to consciousness, clings to consciousness, and determines it to be ‘my self.’ These five clinging-aggregates—attached to, clung to—lead to his long-term loss and suffering.”
SN 22, 85

If not yourself then who are you? I’m here after all—pinch, pinch! What do you call this flesh and bones? What is all this non-self nonsense. Yes, as a body/mind experience there is a person, a collection of five linked energies and actions, pulsing and changing at every instance. There is the body (material form, the Four Dynamic Forces of solid, liquid, temperature, and space/air); feelings (as sense-contacted pleasant, painful and neutral impressions); perception (identifying, judging and conceptualizing the sense impression); mental reactions (how the buildup of habits and personal experiences goes on to charge thoughts, speech and actions); and conscious attention (experiencing action and phenomena as a one-side self perspective). The entire range of experiences and life is known through the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification—physical, sensory and mental cognition. However, the Five Groups shouldn’t be taken as a replacement for self since that would only be a further self-delusion! The Five Groups join together as multiple actions, giving the illusion of the ‘one’ or self.

As a communication and convenience tool, the pronouns ‘he/she, his/hers—I, me, and mine’ are a short-hand general reference to distinguish moments, serving as a description and for communication. Unfortunately, I, me and mine are taken all too seriously, sides are drawn, views held and suffering occurs. The experience into non-self sheds light on problems and life as slowly the self actor burden is released. Only the Middle Way threefold guidance (conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, insight-wisdom) as deliverance can free one from the illusion that is the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

When aware and presently insightful the Five Groups aren't a problem. It is only when carelessly reacting out of self-obsession that there is suffering. Self is a painful grasped charade and trying to hold on to something that doesn't last. Self-deception leads to suffering sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair.

The Body as a Body and not as self

“Form [the body] is like a glob of foam...” SN 22, 95

The body is likened to foam; a soft figure which doesn't last, having no true individual characteristic and is a self-associated illusion. A shell-like housing or chamber, the body protects and holds together muscles, nerves, blood, organs and skeleton. Reacting as a self actor, you identify with a physical image, but the truth is one is affected by appetites, desires, sickness, aging and death. Everything in this Sense Material Realm has a body and shape as protection with nourishment coming from outside the body. The body isn't self, but a non-self joining together of many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self.

Thinking you are forever young and immune, old age, sickness and death are overwhelming. How could this happen to me! The evidence in the mirror, in photographs and seeing how others age can't be denied. Impermanence takes its toll. Yes, there is a body, but there is no unique self. A Middle Way appreciation stands out—the body as body and not as self. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are an obsession and addiction.

Now connect with the present meditation through a centering body scan. Take a few deep breaths to relax. Realize the breath's quality and physical presence. Note your posture, as well as the different pressures and sensations felt at this moment. Follow as the self actor burden reacts to grasp and cling through a careless misperception of reality. Acknowledge the attraction of the physical element. Note the stress and clinging to the body as self. Settling down, Wise Reflection clarifies the body experience as non-self.

Feel the breath's quality and how it extends to affect the whole body. Acknowledge the shift in focus from everyday distractions and uneasiness to a settled awareness. Through a discerning concentration and Wise Reflection, ease into noting the sensations and pressures involving the body. There is facial tension, pressure at the buttocks from sitting as well as pulsing and flinching sensations along with subtler pressures throughout.

Reflect on the Four Dynamic Forces: extension (solid) that is the organs and skeleton, a biologically functioning union; cohesion (liquid) moisture and fluidity as an essential lubrication, vitality and support; temperature (heat) is generated from blood circulation and the body actively thriving; and motion (space/air) the breath, air, respiration, and oxygen as well as motion and movement along with the space and placement of the organs and physical features. Together these basic forces reflect the many actions in the 'one' or body.

Follow awareness for the body. Acknowledge the sticky, self-identification for the body's affecting as stress, pressure, and anxiety. Slowly feel the relaxing shift away from self-identification to a refined intuition. Follow the breath's flow entering, mixing, absorbing and passing throughout the body. As an open-flowing recognition, Wise Reflection clarifies the body experience as non-self.

Acknowledge how the body transforms from a child to a teenager and now adult, (losing hair, skin wrinkling and sagging, putting on weight while also getting sick, weakening, aging and, ultimately, to break down). In touch with present pressures and sensations, realize the body's impermanence.

Awareness Focusing as concentration for the body: Initial Contact is a general breath awareness; Sustained Contact follows the breath passing through the body; Interest is relaxing the physical pressure points; 'Joy' as the body is viewed through a non-self awareness; and having One-Pointed Clarity the body is experienced without self-identification. Acknowledge as self-attachment slowly dispersing and self-burden weakening.

As a present awareness, physical attachment is reduced and a Middle Way appreciation stands out—the body as body and not as self. Arising and fading, a deeper understanding for life and reality is known—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Self-mania halted, acknowledge the non-self qualities and release from self-obsession.

Flesh, blood and bones—there is no denying the body, but I don't have to be caught up in the experience. No matter what I do, there is sickness, aging and death. This body isn't me.

April 2—Wise Reflection for the Body*

“Any kind of form whatever, whether past, future or presently arisen, whether gross or subtle, whether in oneself or external, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, must with right understanding...be regarded thus: ‘This is not mine, this is not I, this is not myself.’” SN 22, 59

Centered on the breath as awareness for the body, follow how the mind naturally settles as a Wise Reflection. Facial muscles relaxed, shoulders down, the abdomen softened, feel as the hourglass-like of self-identification disperses—the body as a body and not as self. Detaching from the body/mind obsession, follow how Wise Reflection expands and distinguishes the non-self true nature of reality. Acknowledge the shift from the self-extremes of indulgence and aggression to a Middle Way appreciation without self-intrusion.

Note how the Four Dynamic Forces engage the body: the collection of solid—skin, skeleton, hair, tissue, nerves, muscles, organs; the collection of liquid—blood, moisture, urine, mucus, marrow, saliva, tears, bile and secretions; the collection of space—air, respiration, breath, gases, and separation between body parts; the collection of temperature—the body’s overall heat, warmer inner temperature and the cooler dampness of external skin. Only as a self actor is one affected by the body. Follow the shift away from self-attachment to a non-self recognition. The many actions join together to give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self—arising and fading, the body isn’t self. Acknowledge as consciousness changes to a restful and spacious non-self experience.

Patient and reflecting, follow the detachment from the physical self-burden. Note how the self-associated preoccupation disperses. Nourished by external sources, acknowledge the conditions, pressures, influences and elements charging the body.

Feel the relief as self-attachment frees up. Reality is impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Without self-identification, follow the breath’s fluid quality as well as clarifying recognition. Sensitive to the impulses of nerve endings, organs, muscles, blood flow and skeletal frame, Wise Reflection directs one to non-self insight—without individual characteristic, the body as a body only and not as self.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact senses the attachment for the body; Sustained Contact notes the physical pressures and stress; Interest acknowledges the misperception for the body as self; 'Joy' as a non-self awareness emerges; and having One-Pointed Clarity as non-self insight is realized.

A Middle Way appreciation is followed. The body isn't taken as a personality view, isn't craved after as mine, nor is it attached to as a self-conceit. Whether considering the body internally or through external sources, the body arises and fades as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Not to be identified, delighted in or pursued as a past, present or future self-association, one isn't measured or defined by the body. Self-identification for the body is released. Insight for the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self stands out.

I was confused. I'm not the body—the body has multiple sources. I now separate from my self-absorbed ways.

April 3—Feelings as Feelings and not as self*

“[Feelings] are like a water bubble...” SN 22, 95

Feelings are likened to bubbles that arise then disappear, reflecting life's impermanence and having no true individual characteristic, and are a self-associated illusion. Identifying with feelings, but the fact is the senses are overwhelmed and one personally reacts to the sense-contacted impressions. Awareness for the body gives way to feelings, the first of the four conscious connections that make up mental appreciation. As rapidly absorbed moments, the present is contacted through the senses as eyes/sight, ears/sound, nose/smell, tongue/taste, skin/touch and mind/thoughts as pleasant, painful or neutral feelings are experienced. Sense-contacted moments are externally generated. Acknowledge the pressure and burden from contacted feelings. A knee-jerk response, comfortable and pleasant feelings are clung to; painful feelings are stressful; and neutral feelings are ignored all together. Feelings aren't self but a non-self joining together of many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self.

There is no moment (not even during meditation) that feelings aren't experienced. Through Insight Meditation one detaches from self-reactions. Yes, there are feelings but you don't have to be overwhelmed by them. Having renunciation and restraint for the senses, self-deception doesn't dominate. Note the arising and fading of felt moments. Yes, there is feeling, but there is no unique self character experiencing the feeling. A Middle Way appreciation stands out—feelings as feelings and not as self. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are an obsession and addiction.

Now connect with the present meditation through a centering body scan. Follow the short-generated wisps of air. There is pressure at the chest and at the abdomen. Pleasant feelings are distracting and an attempt is made to prolong the experience. Forehead tension, stress at the back of the eyes, attention narrowed, aversion, hatred or fear for painful feelings is overwhelming. Note as the breath is labored and panicked. Neutral feelings are found uninteresting, brushed aside and ignored all together. Settling down, Wise Reflection clarifies feelings as non-self.

Awareness Focusing as concentration for feelings: Initial Contact is the felt breath quality and sensation; Sustained Contact turns to identify the outstanding feeling; Interest recognizes the present as either pleasant, painful or neutral; 'Joy' as self-

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identification relaxes; and having One-Pointed Clarity feelings are experienced without self-identification. Acknowledge the self-attachment slowly dispersing and the self-burden weakening.

As a present awareness, felt attachment is reduced and a Middle Way appreciation stands out—feeling as feeling and not as self. Arising and fading, a deeper understanding for life and reality is known—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Self-mania halted, acknowledge the non-self qualities and release from self-obsession.

With so much going on, feelings are a constant distraction. Habits go on to get the better of me. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way have me experiencing life through a settled awareness.

April 4—Wise Reflection for Feelings*

“Any kind of feeling whatever, whether past, future or presently arisen, whether gross or subtle, whether in oneself or external, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, must with right understanding...be regarded thus: ‘This is not mine, this is not I, this is not myself.’” SN 22, 59

Centered on the breath as awareness for feelings, follow as the mind settles to Wise Reflection. Facial muscles relaxed, shoulders down, the abdomen softened, feel as the hourglass-like of self-identification disperses—feeling as feeling and not as self. Detaching from the body/mind obsession, follow how Wise Reflection expands and distinguishes reality’s non-self true nature. Acknowledge the shift from the self extremes of indulgence and aggression to a Middle Way appreciation without self-intrusion.

Note how feelings are engaged. Pleasant feelings are soothing and desirable, painful feelings are harsh and uncomfortable, neutral feelings are ignored. Follow how the pressure of the felt moment arises and fades. Open to the moment as a release from self-related reactions to the non-self nature of life and reality. Only as a self actor is one affected by feelings. Follow the shift away from self-attachment to a non-self recognition. The many actions joining together to give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self—arising and fading, feelings aren’t self. Acknowledge consciousness changing to a restful and spacious non-self experience.

Patient and reflecting, follow the detachment from the felt self-burden. Note how the self-associated preoccupation disperses. Arising from external sense-contacted stimulation, acknowledge the conditions, pressures, influences and elements charging feelings,

Feel the relief as self-attachment frees up. Reality is impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Without self-identification, follow the breath’s fluid quality as well as clarifying recognition. Sensitive to the impulses of sense organs being contacted and aroused, Wise Reflection directs one to a non-self insight—without individual characteristic, feelings as feelings only and not as self.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact senses the present feeling; Sustained Contact notes the physical pressures and stress; Interest acknowledges

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the misperception for feelings as self; 'Joy' as a non-self awareness emerges; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a non-self insight is realized.

A Middle Way is appreciation is followed. Feelings aren't taken as a personality view, aren't craved after as mine, nor are they attached to as self-conceit. Whether considering feelings internally or through external sources, feelings arise and fade as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Not to be identified, delighted in or pursued as a past, present or future self-association, one isn't measured or defined by feelings. Self-identification for feelings is released. Insight for the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self stands out.

Feelings affect me at every moment but I don't have to be dominated by them. I hold on to pleasant feelings, struggle with painful moments, and tune out less obvious ones. Through meditation I realize life as it is.

April 5—Perception as Perception and not as self*

“Perception is like a mirage...” SN 22, 95

Perception is likened to a mirage; tantalizing, beguiling and deceiving, having no true individual characteristic and is a self-associated illusion. Flashing off in the distance, as a mirage is neared it fades or seems always out of reach. Perception serves to categorize sense-contacted experiences and connects with the world. Unfortunately, one goes on to divide the moment into self and ‘other.’ Eyes see shapes and colors, ears hear sounds and tones both soft and loud, the nose smells scents and odors both weak and strong, the tongue tastes bitter and sweet flavors, skin is a tactile sensitivity for rough and soft as well as hot and cold, and mind as a thought recognition and logic formation. A well-known example of misperception is mistaking a stick on a path for a snake. Perception is a limited, self-distortion of reality.

Closer to hyperventilating, self-perception keeps one busy, searching, physically stressed and mentally exhausted. Note the grasping pressure of the breath, the strain at the forehead and behind the eyes, the constriction at the throat and chest, and abdominal pressure. Excited and responding, perception becomes a self-exaggeration, obscuring life and reality. Yes, there is perception, but there is no unique self. A Middle Way appreciation stands out—perception as perception and not as a self. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are an obsession and addiction.

Now connect with the present meditation through a centering body scan. Follow perception as a contacted recognition. The mind busies itself to be engaged and discern. Self requires considerable energy as it goes on to recognize and judge. Meditation is a beneficial timeout from self-consumed antics and distorted assumptions. Acknowledge the relief from the self-perceived needs to define, judge and label. Note how restlessness settles.

Awareness Focusing as concentration for perception: Initial Contact is the breath drawn in tensely as a sense-contacted experience is followed; Sustained Contact perceives the sense impression; Interest is how perception narrows on a subject to identify the impression; ‘Joy’ as perception relaxes; and having One-Pointed Clarity perception is experienced without self-identification. Acknowledge as self-attachment slowly disperses and the self-burden weakens.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

As a present moment awareness, attachment for perception is reduced and a Middle Way appreciation stands out—perception as perception and not as self. Arising and fading, a deeper understanding for life and reality is known—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Self-mania halted, acknowledge the non-self qualities and release from self-obsession.

The Monkey Mind settles down. My judging and reacting stop. What a relief to be without all the jumbled confusion.

April 6—Wise Reflection for Perception *

“Any kind of perception whatever, whether past, future or presently arisen, whether gross or subtle, whether in oneself or external, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, must with right understanding...be regarded thus: ‘This is not mine, this is not I, this is not myself.’” SN 22, 59

Centered on the breath as awareness for perception, follow as the mind naturally settles to a Wise Reflection. Facial muscles relaxed, shoulders down, the abdomen softened, feel as the hourglass-like self-identification disperses—perception as perception and not as self. Detaching from the body/mind obsession, follow how Wise Reflection distinguishes reality’s non-self true nature. Acknowledge the shift from the self extremes of indulgence and aggression to a Middle Way appreciation without self-intrusion.

Note how perception is engaged. The first reaction is to identify and label. Recognize as the mind narrows to perceive—breathing restricted, tension at the forehead as well as behind the eyes, jaw clenched, shoulders hunched up, abdominal and pelvic areas tightening along with thoughts strained. Each encountered is like a Rorschach inkblot test as the environment around you is deciphered. Feel the self-involvement charged by one-sided perception.

Judging and calculating, the sense-contacted world is recognized—eyes/form, ears/sound, nose/smell, mouth/taste, skin/touch and mind/thoughts. Follow the shift away from self-attachment to acknowledge non-self recognition. Many actions together give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self—arising and fading, perception isn’t self. Acknowledge consciousness changing to a restful and spacious non-self experience.

Patient and reflecting, follow the detachment away from the perceived self-burden. Note how the self-associated preoccupation disperses. Generated by external sense-contacted stimulation, acknowledge the conditions, pressures, influences and elements charging perception.

Feel the relief as self-attachment frees up. Reality is impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Without self-identification, follow the breath’s fluid quality as well as clarifying recognition. Sensitive to the impulses of sense impressions leading to perception,

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

Wise Reflection directs one to a non-self insight—without individual characteristic, perception as perception only and not as self.

Awareness Focusing as concentration for perception: Initial Contact acknowledges perception's draw; Sustained Contact follows perception's pressure and stress to recognize; Interest acknowledges the misperception for self; 'Joy' as a non-self awareness emerges; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a non-self insight is realized.

A Middle Way appreciation is followed. Perception isn't taken as a personality view, isn't craved after as mine, nor is it attached to as self-conceit. Whether considering perception internally or through external sources, perception arises and fades as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Not to be identified, delighted in or pursued as a past, present or future self-association, one isn't measured or defined by perception. Self-identification for perception is released. Insight for the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self stands out.

No wonder I'm confused and challenged. I'm not seeing things clearly. My perception is distorted. I can't trust my first impression.

April 7—Mental Reactions as Mental Reactions and not as self*

“Mental Reactions are a plantain tree...” SN 22, 95

Mental reactions are likened to the rolled layers of a plantain tree, having no hard wood, or true individual characteristic and are a self-associated illusion. Here an off base autobiographical character through family history, schooling, friends, cultural influences and personal experiences colors one’s personality. Carried over, measured and continually updated is a self-résumé. Through mental reactions and charged motives, the Three Poisons of greed, hatred and confusion drive one. Subconscious dormant, active and transgressing habits play out. Mental reactions aren’t self, but a non-self joining together of the many actions giving the illusion of the ‘one’ or self.

Views and attitudes for a certain political affiliation, for disliking broccoli, or not getting along with certain people are a conditioned imprinting. Somewhat like a movie, the many experiences are spliced together and added on to playing out a leading role. Yes, there are mental reactions, but there is no unique self. A Middle Way appreciation stands out—mental reactions as mental reactions and not as self. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are an obsession and addiction.

Now connect with the present meditation through a centering body scan. Follow the role of mental reactions—breath stressed, facial muscles drawn, shoulders arched up and back stiff, chest pressured, and abdominal and pelvic strain. Go deeper below the basic level of breath and body awareness to experience how subconsciously generated habits and motives form. Habits churn and flash in the mind like so many distorted faces, jabbering mouths, and garbled sounds. The subconscious exposed, note the pressure and burden as a self-identity emerges seeking expression. Feel the underlying stress behind mental reactions compelling thoughts, speech and actions.

Adhering to Wise Action, a careless angry individual is reshaped to an aware, generous and good willed person. Meditating, subconscious greed, hatred and confusion are recognized emerging as a self actor. In turn dormant, active and transgressing expressions play out, leading to suffering consequences.

Awareness Focusing as concentration for mental reactions: Initial Contact follows the breath’s quality and mind as unsettled; Sustained Contact notes the restless jabbering mind; Interest identifies the mental states as greedy, hateful or confused;

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

'Joy' as subconscious mental habits relax; and having One-Pointed Clarity mental reactions are experienced without self-identification. Acknowledge as self-attachment slowly disperses and the self-burden weakens.

As a present moment awareness, attachment for mental reactions are reduced and a Middle Way appreciation stands out—mental reactions as mental reactions and not as self. Arising and fading, a deeper understanding for life and reality is known—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Self-mania halted, acknowledge the non-self qualities and release from self-obsession.

I've been driving myself crazy with all my memories, habits and desires. Always doing, needing and plotting—it's not like I'm happier being myself. Self has been a burden.

April 8—Wise Reflection for Mental Reactions*

“Any kind of mental reaction whatever, whether past, future or presently arisen, whether gross or subtle, whether in oneself or external, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, must with right understanding...be regarded thus: ‘This is not mine, this is not I, this is not myself.’” SN 22, 59

Centered on the breath as awareness for mental reactions, follow as the mind naturally settles as a Wise Reflection. Facial muscles relaxed, shoulders down, the abdomen softened, feel as the hourglass-like of self-identified accumulation disperses—mental reactions as mental reactions and not as self. Detaching from the body/mind obsession, follow how Wise Reflection expands and distinguishes the non-self true nature of life and reality. Acknowledge the shift from the self extremes of indulgence and aggression to a Middle Way appreciation without self-intrusion.

Note how memories are drawn upon and a self-history is engaged. Aware of the subconscious inner monologue and the chattering voice, realized are that life and events don't happen randomly but as purposeful action. Without pressing, follow the settled awareness away from the narrowed, self-association. Follow the shift away from self-attachment to non-self recognition. Many actions join together to give the illusion of the 'one' or self—arising and fading, mental reactions aren't self. Acknowledge consciousness changing to a restful and spacious non-self experience.

Patient and reflecting, follow the detachment away from the self-perceived burden. Note how the self-associated preoccupation disperses. Arising from external sense-contacted stimulation, acknowledge the conditions, pressures, influences and elements charging perception.

Feel the relief as self-attachment frees up. Reality is impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Without self-identification, follow the breath's fluid quality as well as clarifying recognition. Sensitive to the impulses of mental reactions and flashing thoughts, Wise Reflection directs one to a non-self insight—without individual characteristic, mental reactions as mental reactions only and not as self.

Awareness Focusing as concentration for mental reactions: Initial Contact acknowledges the mental state; Sustained Contact identifies and follows the mental reaction; Interest acknowledges the misperception for mental reactions as self; 'Joy'

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as a non-self awareness emerges; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a non-self insight is realized.

A Middle Way appreciation is followed. Mental reactions aren't taken as a personality view, aren't craved after as mine, nor are they attached to as a self-conceit. Whether considering mental reactions internally or through external sources, mental reactions arise and fade as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Not to be identified, delighted in or pursued as a past, present or future self-association, one isn't measured or defined by mental reactions. Self-identification for mental reactions is released. Insight for the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self stands out.

I'm forever turning another page as a self actor. The Middle Way directs me as a personal insight. Self doesn't have to get the better of me!

April 9—Conscious Attention as Conscious Attention and not as self*

“Consciousness is like a magical illusion...” SN 22, 95

Conscious attention is likened to a trick performed by a magician—a deception with no true individual characteristic and is a self-illusion. A charming hoax but not self, conscious attention mistakes phenomena in general as self-defined. Thinking, logic, and cognition are all part of consciousness. Caught up in the center of a self-deluded storm, life-action is misunderstood and dizzying. Conscious attention isn't self, but a non-self joining together of many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self.

Generated and formed around sense-contacted actions, there is eyes-sight, ears-sound, nose-smell, tongue-taste, tactile-touch, and mind-thoughts conscious attention. The arising of conditions, pressures, influences and elements give the illusion of the 'one' or self. Unfortunately, a simple conscious moment is mistaken as self. By virtue of sheer intellect and imagination, a pseudo-honor of self and ego (I, me, mine) is engaged. Descartes' 'I think therefore I am' is a misguided self-anthem when, in fact, there are only action experiences arising and fading without any true self-significance. A Middle Way appreciation stands out—conscious attention as conscious attention and not as self. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are an obsession and addiction.

Where perception singles out and separates things into subject-object, conscious attention is a general view and attachment for life as a self-experience. Grasping as a self actor, the burden and suffering associated with self follows (sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair). A self-promoted fairytale of greed, hatred and confusion play out as dormant, active, and transgressing habits.

Now connect with the present meditation through a centering body scan. Note how the senses (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, touch and mind) are contacted and how an off based self-association emerges. Follow the flow from the broader breath awareness forming to a conscious attention. As the breath settles, the mind follows to calm down. Begin to experience and distinguish conscious attention without self-injected limitations. Without a corresponding action catalyst, self-illusion fades; action stirs consciousness and in turn a one-sided self-perception forms as deluded thoughts and compromising responses.

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Awareness Focusing as concentration for conscious attention: Initial Contact follows the breath; Sustained Contact as the breath action is followed; Interest identifies the contacted action; 'Joy' as conscious attention is absorbed; and having One-Pointed Clarity conscious attention is experienced without self-identification. Acknowledge as self-attachment slowly disperses and the self-burden weakens.

As a present moment awareness, attachment for conscious attention is reduced and a Middle Way appreciation stands out—conscious attention as conscious attention and not as self. Arising and fading, a deeper understanding for life and reality is known—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Self-mania halted, acknowledge the non-self qualities and release from self-obsession.

I fall into a deception of my own making. Life happens and plays out, but I don't have to take it personally as self.

April 10—Wise Reflection for Conscious Attention *

“Any kind of conscious attention whatever, whether past, future or presently arisen, whether gross or subtle, whether in oneself or external, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, must with right understanding...be regarded thus: ‘This is not mine, this is not I, this is not myself.’” SN 22, 59

Centered on the breath as awareness for conscious attention, follow as the mind naturally settles to a Wise Reflection. Facial muscles relaxed, shoulders down, the abdomen softened, feel as the hourglass-like of self-identification disperses—conscious attention as conscious attention and not as self. Detaching from the body/mind association, follow how Wise Reflection expands and distinguishes the non-self true nature of life and reality. Acknowledge the shift from the self extremes of indulgence and aggression to a Middle Way appreciation without self-intrusion.

Note how conscious attention as a self-association is engaged. Follow the attention for the breath’s quality. Through action, consciousness forms and is engaged. Follow the shift away from self-attachment to non-self realization. Many actions join together to give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self—arising and fading, conscious attention isn’t self. Feel how consciousness changes to a restful and spacious non-self experience.

Patient and reflecting, follow the detachment away from the self-conscious burden. Note the self-associated preoccupation disperses. Arising from external sense-contacted stimulation, acknowledge the conditions, pressures, influences and elements charging concentration.

Feel the relief as self-attachment frees up. Reality is impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Without self-identification, follow the breath’s fluid quality as well as clarifying recognition. Sensitive to the impulses of conscious attention arising from action, Wise Reflection directs one to experience non-self insight—without individual characteristic, conscious attention as conscious attention and not as self.

Awareness Focusing as concentration for conscious attention: Initial Contact as awareness for the breath; Sustained Contact notes the pressures and stress of conscious action; Interest follows the self-misperception for consciousness; ‘Joy’ as

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a non-self awareness emerges; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a non-self insight is realized.

A Middle Way appreciation is followed. Conscious attention isn't taken as a personality view, isn't craved after as mine, nor is it attached to a self-conceit. Whether considering conscious attention internally or through external sources, conscious attention arises and fades as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Not to be identified, delighted in or pursued as a past, present or future self-association, one isn't measured or defined by conscious attention. Release self-identification as conscious attention is realized. Insight for the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self stands out.

My consciousness narrows as a self-burden. Aware how charged I am, I relax and allow my mind to clear.

April 11—The Three Poisons and the Worldly Ways*

“Greed is a quality of the world that, when arising, arises for harm, stress, and discomfort. Aversion [Hatred]... [as well as confusion] is a quality of the world that, when arising, arises for harm, stress, and discomfort.” SN 3, 23

With the worldly ways as backdrop, thoughts, speech and actions are dominated by the Three Poisons. Greed, hatred and confusion, torment life, and are a frustration as pain and suffering is experienced. There is a delayed effect as dormant, active and transgressing potentials arise under the right conditions.

The Greed Habit

“Greed causes harm. Greed provokes the mind. People don’t realize it as a danger born from within. A person, when greedy, doesn’t know his own welfare...Overcome with greed, he’s in the dark, blind. But when one, abandoning greed, for what would merit greed, greed gets shed from him.” IT 88

Greed reflects a desirous, lusting and ever needy self-character trying to fulfill a self-image and meet certain expectations. Unsettled, one is on the prowl for more, different, or something better suited. On edge, anxiousness and disturbed, it is impossible to be satisfied. The worldly ways of gain/loss, fame/dishonor, praise/blame, happiness/pain affect you accordingly.

As though moving on fast forward, acknowledge how greedy thoughts are exhausting. Life is a busy runaround seeking fulfillment and gratification. Excited by greed, feel how you wearily grope about. Note how desire affects the breath’s quality—rough, panting and pressure-filled. Grasping at anything, the pleasure is short-lived as the yearning mind is fickle and insatiable. Distracted and anxious (tension at the temples, forehead lined as well as pressure at your chest), the breath pants and the mind rattles on out of control. Thoughts jumps about as the greedy habit races from one fantasy, infatuation and longing on to the next. Follow how provocation first arises as a subconscious forethought. The self-illusion is held together by craving, linking past, present and future habitual actions leading to suffering consequences.

Settling as a present awareness for the breath, relax the facial muscles around the eyes while allowing the lower jaw to drop slightly, shoulders and back muscles at

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ease, and abdominal muscles relaxing. Sense how as a self actor desire makes one rigid and unsettled. Note the grasping and clinging both physically and mentally through the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. The agitation, unsettling, busy thoughts, nervousness, excitement and preoccupation reflect a one-sided, self-obsession.

Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality. When desiring and distracted one consumed by self-gratification. Physically stressed, tense and pressured, along with flashing thoughts and habits, acknowledge motives' affect. Self is linked to a charged habit association. Subconscious impulses exposed, gently allow the conflicting self-deception to disperse. Through a settled awareness desire subsides. Acknowledge patience and tranquility as habitual domination is released. A Middle Way appreciation clarifies the present from careless and impulsive to Wisely Reflecting and responsible.

The antidote for greed is renunciation and restraint. Again this isn't a condemnation or censorship, but a mindful and responsible application. Through renunciation and restraint control over the six senses is known. Note how the senses are a nuisance and provoking. The Middle Way appreciation avoids the extremes of indulgence and gratification as well as hostility and aggression. Renunciation and restraint as well as doing less leads to a settled and peaceful mind. Feel the greater well being as you settle down and the mind clears. No matter how enjoyable the moment, reflect on impermanence realizing how things end. Acknowledge how the drive to seek out and become consumed by greed. The self actor laments and cries when not getting his or her way. Life is discerned not only as impermanent, but also how desire is detrimental and compromising.

Without resisting or trying to force the meditation, Awareness Focusing as concentration helps settle desirous impulses. Note how the grasping burden for greed weakens as the mind quiets. Initial Contact is recognizing the greedy impacted breath; Sustained Contact follows the quality and course of the rough respiration; Interest acknowledges greed's dizzying affect; 'Joy' is turning away to release greed; and having One-Pointed Clarity, self-attached greed is dropped. Feel the shift from worldly distractions to a non-self insight and release from self-obsession. Desire is a burden and obstacle obscuring life's true nature.

Desire is beguiling because it's so much fun—but then it ends! I feel how my mind races and how unsettled I become. I'm left wanting for more. Now I'm aware. The Middle Way is a bridge to sanity.

April 12—The Hatred Habit*

“Aversion causes harm. Aversion provokes the mind. People don't realize it as a danger born from within. A person, when aversive, doesn't know his own welfare...Overcome with aversion, he's in the dark, blind. But when one, abandoning aversion, feels no aversion, for what would merit aversion, aversion drops away from him.” IT 88

Marked by frustration, a false sense of security as well as fear, hatred is more obvious in its affects. A self-indignation, one feels threatened and overwhelmed. Jealousy, bitterness and revenge are undermining. Face drawn, eyes bugged out, jaw clenched, pain wrinkling the forehead, stomach acid ferments while the mind narrows and locks up. Overwhelmed by anger to the point of shaking, the breath is closer to a strangulation. The worldly ways of gain/loss, fame/dishonor, praise/blame, happiness/pain affect you accordingly.

Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to establish awareness. Now settling down, slowly begin to relax in gradual increments the frustration and allow blocked channels within the body to open. The hateful buildup begins to disperse. Note the change in the breath's quality, body relaxing and mental strain freeing up. When distracted and hateful one is consumed by farfetched anger and rage as well as needing to defend and justify a self-illusion.

Feel how hatred is unsettling and overwhelming. Worldly ways are a self-consumed distraction. Notice the flashing thought urgency. Acknowledge how subconscious motives affect one as a dormant, active and transgressing burden. Note the physical stress, tension and pressure. Follow how the provocation first arises as a subconscious forethought. Self-illusion is held together by craving, linking past, present and future habitual actions leading to suffering consequences.

Subconscious impulses exposed, gently allow the self-deception to disperse, giving way to a settled awareness without hatred. Acknowledge the patience and tranquility emerging as the habit domination is released. A Middle Way appreciation clarifies the present from careless and impulsive to Wisely Reflecting and responsible.

Patience along with goodwill is the antidote for hatred. Rebuffed and inconvenienced, sense the onset of frustration leading to outright hatred and

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outrage. Present identification is key to stopping anger. Take a few deep breaths. Feel how eyes bug out and a flushed feeling passes. Smile to break the tension. Follow the Middle Way appreciation for patience then channeling to goodwill. Acknowledge the shift from self-related anger to insight. Life is discerned not only as impermanent, but also how hatred is detrimental and compromising.

Without resisting or trying to force the meditation, the Awareness Focusing as concentration helps settle hateful impulses. Note how the grasping hateful burden weakens as the mind settles. Initial Contact is recognizing the hateful impacted breath; Sustained Contact follows the quality and course of the rough respiration; Interest is acknowledging the hateful mental state; 'Joy' is turning away to release the hate; and having One-Pointed Clarity, self-attached hatred is dropped. Feel the shift from worldly distractions to a non-self insight and release from self-obsession. Hatred is a burden and obstacle obscuring life's true nature.

Anger gets the better of me. This is something I have to work on. Signals arise. I'm now more aware. I now have the patience and the understanding to deal with my bad-temper. I don't have to get all worked up.

April 13—The Confusion Habit*

“Delusion [confusion] causes harm. Delusion provokes the mind. People don't realize it, as a danger born from within. A person, when deluded, doesn't know his own welfare...Overcome with delusion he's in the dark, blind. But when one, abandoning delusion, feels no delusion, for what would merit delusion, he disperses all delusion.” IT 88

Coping with demands, responsibilities and deadlines, worry, doubt and confusion are overwhelming. Challenged and let down at every turn, one is bewildered. A debilitating insecurity as confusion is smothering. Acknowledge how apprehension twitches through the body (facial muscles tense, throat thick and voice cracking, stomach aflutter while the breath is labored). Clouding life and reality, unable to recognize the present, self-confusion is overwhelming. The effects of the self actor are paralyzing, making one tired and irritable. The worldly ways of gain/loss, fame/dishonor, praise/blame, happiness/pain affect one accordingly.

Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to establish a present awareness. When confused and distracted one isn't mindful, but overwhelmed by concerns and doubt. Feel confusion's unsettling affects. The worldly ways are a self-deceiving distraction.

Notice the flashing urgency as distressing and panic filled thoughts race through the mind. A run away imagination gets the better of one to fall victim to doubt and insecurity. Acknowledge how pulsing, subconscious motives form as dormant, active and transgressing burdens. Physically stressed and pressured, confusion reigns. Follow how the provocation first arises as a subconscious forethought. The self-illusion is held together by craving, linking past, present and future habitual actions, leading to suffering consequences.

Subconscious impulses exposed, gently allow the self-deception to disperse, giving way to a settled awareness without confusion. Acknowledge the patience and tranquility emerging as the habit domination is released. A Middle Way appreciation clarifies the moment from careless and impulsive to Wisely Reflecting and responsible.

Strict mindfulness and patience is the antidote to confusion. Acknowledge the disturbed mental state by connecting with the breath's quality and physical stress.

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Calming down one is able to deal with the disturbed mental state. Following a Middle Way appreciation without aggression or hostility, acknowledge the disturbance and provocation. Smile as a benefactor. There is nothing wrong that can't be settled or righted. Gently releasing the confusion, feel relief, goodwill and patience. Life is discerned life not only as impermanent, but also how confusion is compromising.

Without resisting or trying to force the meditation, the Awareness Focusing as concentration helps settle confusion. Note how the grasping burden for confusion weakens as the mind settles. Initial Contact is recognizing the confused impacted breath; Sustained Contact follows the anxious quality; Interest acknowledges the confused mental state; 'Joy' is turning away to release the confusion; and having One-Pointed Clarity, self-attached confusion is dropped. Feel the shift from worldly distractions on to a non-self insight and release removed from self-obsession. Confusion is a burden and obstacle obscuring life's true nature.

When I'm confused I feel panicked and uncertain—nothing is right and everything is wrong. I'm aware and settle down.

April 14—The Fine-Material Awareness or Jhana Absorptions* (reduced sensual involvement and refined concentration)

“There is no meditative concentration for him who lacks insight, and no insight for him who lacks meditative concentration. He in whom are found both meditative concentration and insight, indeed, is close to Nirvana.” DH 372

The Seclusion Absorption The Concentration Absorption The Equanimity Absorption The Detachment Absorption

Concentration as a true present awareness and insight is elusive. You can be meditating, but the mind isn't necessarily settled or focused. Fortunately, the Fine-Material Awareness or jhanas as a deeper meditation absorption have a special place in meditation practice. As a refined concentration connected to the subtler Fine-Material Realm (March 18), experienced are insights to how the mind and consciousness interact (the subconscious and self-identification) as well as non-self freedom recognition.

Building on the Awareness Focusing as concentrating (which relates primarily to present Sense Realm experiences), the Fine-Material Awareness continues as a natural extension of Insight Meditation. Separating from impulsive habit reactions, Awareness Focusing as concentration was a natural progression for how the mind focuses and connects to realize impermanence, life's general dissatisfaction and non-self nature. A basic control was brought to life. Relating to physical demands, the six senses and the conditioned Sense Realm, Awareness Focusing followed the coarser body or 'material form' and associated interactions.

The Fine-Material Awareness serves as an example and experience for something other and outside sense-contacted obsessions. All you have known is a body/mind identified self-illusion. Turning away from this hardcore misperception as a non-self insight and release from a self-reference stands out. Separating from the demands of the Sense Realm not as an escape but discerning the true nature of life and reality, a Fine-Material Awareness is known. As the body/mind identification weakens a refined awareness and concentrated quality as deepened intuition are experienced.

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Key to continued maturing insight is the Middle Way's threefold emphasis of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom. Without improving one's behavior to be responsible and ethically aware through the Five Wise Actions (goodwill, honesty, generosity, abstinence and sobriety), you would find it difficult to settle down and the mind would still be affected by poor judgment, impulsiveness and careless actions. Renunciation and restraint are also crucial in bringing a further steadied control to not be carried away by sensual gratification. From this grounded experience, the Fine-Material absorptions and insight are applied and experienced. The Fine-Material concentration is nevertheless impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action.

Cultivating the Fine-Material Awareness is like turning off the breaker switches in the fuse box-like of sensual-gratification and impulsive reactions. Detaching from the sensory burden and overload of eyes and sight, ears and hearing, nose and scent, tongue and taste, touch and sensations, thoughts and mind settle. As a compelling urgency, sense stimulation is exhausting as body/mind self-deceived attachment. Once the sensual electric charge is reduced, self-directed habits and how the subconscious functions are better realized.

The Fine-Material Awareness absorptions are also referred to as 'ecstasies' because of the 'joy' experienced as tranquility and discernment. A deeper appreciation and recognition for life is known and penetrated as non-self insight. Experiencing concentration, joy and insight continues as a Middle Way maturing. Directed to the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends is known.

The Seclusion Absorption

“Quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskillful mental qualities, he enters and remains in the first jhana [absorption]: rapture and pleasure born from seclusion, accompanied by directed thought and evaluation. He permeates and pervades, suffuses and fills this very body with the rapture and pleasure born from seclusion...There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by rapture and pleasure born from withdrawal. And as he remains thus heedful, ardent, and resolute, any memories and resolves related to the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning his mind gathers and settles inwardly, grows unified and centered.” MN119

“Friend, in the first jhana absorption five distractions [the Monkey Mind] are abandoned and five awareness focusing...seclusion factors [as concentration] are possessed. Here, when [the meditator] has entered upon the first absorption, sensual desire is abandoned, ill will is abandoned, sloth and torpor are abandoned, restlessness and remorse are abandoned, and doubt is

abandoned; and there occur [Initial Contact, Sustained Contact, Interest, 'Joy,' and One-Pointed Clarity].” MN 43

The Seclusion Absorption continues as a natural extension of a deepening meditative experience. Detaching through meditation is a 'seclusion' from all the distractions and disturbances related to Sense Realm activities. The meditative timeout and rest from life's demand is a beneficial doing 'nothing' (nothing disturbing or self-promoting). Experienced is joy through quieting everyday actions and releasing habits to have a secluded and distinct awareness. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation unite with the Fine-Material Awareness to experience the Seclusion Absorption. A non-self insight and release from self-involvement stands out.

Take a few deep breaths through the nose to relax. A body scan is settling. Identify with the present quiet surroundings. Check your posture and note the different physical pressures and sensations. Slowly disconnect from the self actor urgency and allow the Fine-Material Awareness to come naturally as you step back away from Sense Realm attraction. Acknowledge the freeing from, separation and detachment of the compulsive nature to do and be. Wisely Reflecting, an undisturbed tranquility without sensory input is experienced. The secluded awareness allows sensual activity to fall away. Feel the separation from the coarser Sense Realm preoccupation.

The Monkey Mind is weakened but still manages to flare up in occasional chattering instances. Still charged by everyday compulsions, random thought impressions aren't actively followed or react on. Note as the mind squeezes and bears down around a thought. Acknowledge the open-flowing awareness as the mind settles. If longstanding difficulties with anger, insecurity or confusion arise, acknowledge the clenching, clinging and struggling with these issues. Below the level of everyday self-related stress is a quiet and settled joy removed from Sense Realm involvement. Joy is known as the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are released. Insight Meditation is both instructing and is revealing. Following a Middle Way appreciation, connect with an intuitive Wise Reflection.

As the senses settle down, recognize how the body/mind association weakens. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are dropped. Feel the shift away from self-absorbed greed, hatred and confusion. The Middle Way appreciation joins as an intensified Wise Reflection removed from indulgence and hostility. The Seclusion Absorption as a Fine-Material Awareness is experienced.

The Seclusion Absorption has the broader, overall focus of Initial Contact, Sustained Contact, Interest, 'Joy' and One-Pointed Clarified awareness. Initial Contact begins as a breath appreciation; Sustained Contact follows the awareness and settling

away from sense contacts; Interest is knowing and acknowledging the refined seclusion; 'Joy' is an awareness separating from Sense Realm activity; and having One-Pointed Clarity the mind isn't distracted by sense-related impressions.

Acknowledge how self-identification fades into the background. Insight is more profound than the runaway imagination and self-attachments. Note the settled and refined attention. Connect with the Fine-Material Awareness as a non-self insight. Without the contributing sense-related factors, dormant, active and transgressing habits are temporarily subdued. The Seclusion Absorption furthers non-self insight and the release from self-reference.

A pleasure born of seclusion and meditative unification of mind, acknowledge the tranquility experienced to be separated from Sense Realm activity. Recognizing how the absorption is brought about, realize the purposeful action involved and how one is instrumental in directing perception. While less dramatic and obvious, there persists a low-level self-attachment involvement. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent. Wisely Reflecting, non-self insight turns away from self-reference.

Settled and bringing sensory contact under control, the Seclusion Absorption gives way to the Concentration Absorption or second jhana.

It's a relief to settle down and detach from all my demands. I feel how charged-up I live. Sense distractions quieted, I settle to a penetrating awareness.

April 15—The Concentration Absorption*

“With the stilling of directed thoughts and evaluations, he enters and remains in the second jhana [absorption]: rapture and pleasure born of composure, unification of awareness free from directed thought and evaluation — internal assurance. He permeates and pervades, suffuses and fills this very body with the rapture and pleasure born of composure...There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by rapture and pleasure born of composure. And as he remains thus heedful, ardent, and resolute, any memories and resolves related to the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning his mind gathers and settles inwardly, grows unified and centered.” MN119

Concentration isn't automatically and instantaneous, but eased into through Interest, 'Joy' and One-Pointed Clarity as Sense Realm activity is reduced and the mundane identification of Initial and Sustained Contact drop off. Settling as a seclusion recognition, there is a shift away from sensory activity and impressions to tranquility, giving way to concentration and a deeper mindful ease as mental distractions are removed. Wisely Reflecting, note how the mind settles and moves away from a body/mind identification. A non-self insight and release from self-involvement stands out. The self actor is subdued.

The mind is like a muscle as the attention strains to judge and deal with the thought experience. Follow as the mind relaxes through a Middle Way appreciation not absorbed in self extremes. Don't bear down to scrutinize the moment but note how the mind quiets to an open-flowing awareness. Acknowledge how concentration expands to be unburdened from attachments, impulsiveness and overt self-identification.

Follow as self-impulsiveness drops away and shifts from the broader physical identification to a settled concentrated absorption. It is through the six senses that the self-illusion is aroused and now it is through the settling of the six senses that the self actor is disconnected. Through Interest, 'Joy' and a One-Pointed Clarity, acknowledge the relief and well being that is the Concentrated Absorption. Sounds can echo, sensations tingle and the Monkey Mind may screech, but your attention doesn't actively engage as curiosity to rush over and interact with everyday stimulation and provocations. Disengaged, note how the everyday impulse to respond settles down. Experience the connection with the present moment through

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a composed attention. Acknowledge the spaciousness experienced as a concentration without self-focus.

Awareness and attention stand out as concentration removed from sense engagement and overt self-identification. Note as the discursive monologue, persisting habits and compelling intention fall mute. One-Pointed Clarity becomes a Fine-Material Awareness Concentration Absorption. With the composed steadied Interest, 'Joy' and One-Pointed Clarity stand out. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent.

Settled and bringing discursive and random thoughts under control, the Concentration Absorption gives way to the Equanimity Absorption or third jhana.

Quiet, clear and steady, my mind is undisturbed. Closer to a vacuum and spaciousness, I'm concentrated.

April 16—The Equanimity Absorption *

“With the fading of rapture, he remains equanimous, mindful, and alert, and senses pleasure with the body. He enters and remains in the third jhana [absorption], of which the Noble Ones declare, ‘Equanimous and mindful, he has a pleasant abiding.’ He permeates and pervades, suffuses and fills this very body with the pleasure divested of rapture. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded with pleasure divested of rapture. And as he remains thus heedful, ardent, and resolute, any memories and resolves related to the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning his mind gathers and settles inwardly, grows unified and centered.” MN119

Settled to be relieved of sensory involvement, the Equanimity Absorption stands out. Subconscious habit energies now dormant, acknowledge the relief from Sense Realm pressures and distractions. A non-self relevance and release from self-involvement stands out. The self actor is subdued.

Equanimity isn't only an undisturbed tranquility, but also an ease, confidence, fulfillment, and awareness that comes from applying renunciation and restraint. Removed from the obvious sensory agitation, impulsive reactions drop away and overt self-involvement settles. Follow the establishing of the Equanimity Absorption. Settled and at ease in Equanimity, the Fine-Material Realm Awareness is a 'joyful' recognition, relaxed and having One-Pointed Clarity. Acknowledge the present awareness detaching from physical identification and settling to equanimity.

Acknowledge the relief from sensual gratification. With sensory involvement and grosser self-identification dropped, note the relief, settling, well being and fulfillment experienced. The urgency to be and need falls away. Recognized are the conditions as causes and effects as purposeful action generating and upholding a self-delusion. You made yourself into a self actor.

The body/mind identification fades as interest gives way to 'Joy' and One-Pointed Clarity. Insight is more profound than a runaway imagination and self-attachment. The mind relaxes in ways unrealized before. The moment is centered and quiet, residing in equanimity as a secluded and concentrated attention. Equanimity is experienced as a tranquil awareness removed from Sense Realm arousal. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent.

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Settled as a calmed well being, the Equanimity Absorption gives way to the Detachment Absorption or fourth jhana.

Undistracted and unworried, there is only my calm abiding. I feel the relief to not be engaged and involved. Without a body/mind self-identification, my mind is clear.

April 17—The Detachment Absorption*

“With the abandoning of pleasure and pain — as with the earlier disappearance of elation and distress — he enters and remains in the fourth jhana [absorption]: purity of equanimity and mindfulness, neither-pleasure-nor-pain. He sits, permeating the body with a pure, bright awareness. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by pure, bright awareness. And as he remains thus heedful, ardent, and resolute, any memories and resolves related to the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning his mind gathers and settles inwardly, grows unified and centered.” MN119

Removed from sense-contacted action, meditation deepens to an open-flowing, spacious, and detached concentration as equanimity gives way to the Detachment Absorption. Having separated and dropped the cruder Sense Realm impulsive focus and pursuits, only a subtle self-identification remains. Know the depths of this settled mental capacity and recognition. As though opening a door and entering a room without any walls, floor or ceiling, one is unrestricted and not bound by sensory identification or overt self-reference (yet a lingering self-focus remains). A non-self insight and release from self-involvement stands out. The self actor is temporarily subdued. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation unite as a Fine-Material Awareness to experience the Detachment Absorption.

Feel the actual relief and comfort to be separated from Sense Realm identification. Restlessness settles while subconscious habits are dormant. As a personal recognition, follow the present moment Fine-Material detachment; a neither-pain-nor-pleasure separation from sensory onslaught and overt self-reference is known. Note how awareness is marked as relief from exaggerated role playing and pursuits. The Detachment Absorption as a refined and settled recognition stands out.

Acknowledge the absence, the non-self emptiness and cessation from strong Sense Realm compulsive gains and benefits. The proverbial self-monkey is off the back for a moment. Relief as weightlessness, only a lingering self-awareness persists, as the more overt body/mind identification falls away. One-Pointed Clarity as a Detachment Absorption emerges as equanimity. Tranquility is experienced as a penetrating Wise Reflection, undisturbed and not complicated by overt self-involvement.

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Acknowledge how self-identification fades into the background. Settled and refined, insight is more profound than self-attachments. Without the contributing factors, dormant, active and transgressing habits are temporarily defused.

Through Seclusion, Concentration, Equanimity, and now the Detachment Penetration, recognize the conditions, pressures and influences associated with each absorption and how they emerge as a self-release. Absent is all the drama and hyperactivity connected with the Sense Realm. Follow how purposeful action relates to the Fine-Material Awareness. One-by-one as the conditioned sequences are experienced, Wisely Reflecting to recognize how the moment arises. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent. So this meditation experience and Fine-Material Awareness comes to be, is established, and goes on to fade. The Fine-Material concentrated meditation distinguishes non-self emptiness, release as well as cessation from self-reference.

Settled and bringing sensory engagement under control, the Fine-Material Awareness reflects a refined experience of reality.

I'm settled and concentrated. I've let go of my worldly hankering to experience a clearer recognition without self.

April 18—Emptiness as Cessation and Freedom from Self-Reference*

“This is void of a self or of what belongs to a self.’ This is called the deliverance of mind through voidness [emptiness].” MN 43

Known are all too well the unsettling and exhaustion, the burden and pursuit as struggle with the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Like Humpty Dumpty, the self-image is routinely knocked over, put back together, and eventually falls apart again. Yes, there is the experience of body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention, not as self but rather as involved, complex actions. It is only when mistaking the Five Groups as self that suffering as a self actor takes place. Stop chasing and trying to uphold a self-illusion, stop motivated greed, hatred and confusion, stop craving after, and suffering stops. You are ‘empty’ or without a true self.

Emptiness isn’t chaos or a nothingness, but rather there is no individual, defined or unique self-source; the many actions join to give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self. The practical and benefiting side of non-self emptiness, is that self-promoted habits and associations don’t have to be a suffering. The Middle Way appreciation guides one from carelessness to a non-self experience as emptiness and cessation from self-reference. Penetrating emptiness is to know freedom.

Sitting at home or in a meditation hall, recognize the innate emptiness within the meditative moment. Centered through a body scan, relaxing physical tension and calming the mind, follow as you settle down to acknowledge ‘emptiness.’ Yes, ‘empty’ as undisturbed and free from everyday distractions, conditions pressures, influences and elements. ‘Empty’ as detached from physical sensations, feelings settled, perception at ease, mental reactions quieted, and conscious attention refined. The Five Groups are a non-self emptiness without self-identity. Craved after and clinging, one suffers accordingly because of self-deception. Family history, friends, schooling, politics, workplace associations as well as intimate experiences along with a conditioned personality, feel as habitual impulses slowly begin dispersing. The body/mind identification is non-self—empty and free.

Feel the spaciousness or ‘emptiness’ as a non-self relief and release from self-promoted ways. Note the ‘emptiness’ of any self that is the body, feelings, perception, mental reactions, and conscious attention attachments. Acknowledge the release of underlying subconscious habits for greed, hatred and confusion to know non-self freedom.

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The body is 'empty' and depends upon nourishment; feelings are 'empty' and depend upon sense-contacted stimulation; perception is 'empty' and depends upon a subject-object judgment; mental reactions are 'empty' and depend upon an associated personal history; and conscious attention is 'empty' and depends upon action phenomena interacting place. The body/mind identification revealed, feel the spaciousness and emptiness from the self-attached burden.

Sitting settled and focused, one is 'empty' and free, released from physical contact as well as mental distractions. In this present moment there is only the grounded awareness of the body (breath), feelings, mind and life-actions. Know the freedom as 'emptiness' or cessation to be released from self-delusion. As a Wise Reflection revealing the true nature of life and reality, all experiences are acknowledged as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self impersonal nature—empty and free. It is the many actions that give the illusion of the 'one' or self.

The emptiness realization continues as a penetrating intuition as separate and 'empty' from all self-associations. At this present moment there is only the sitting to meditate, the breath quality, and a concentrated recognition. One is empty, void or without the associated actions of family, friends, work and ongoing demands. There is only this present distinguishing meditative awareness. Continuing further, one is empty, void or withdrawn, for example, from one's city or town. There is only a present meditative awareness. Continuing further one is empty, void and withdrawn from the world at large and this earth. There is only this distinguishing present moment meditative awareness. You are 'empty' and free from all conditioned and promoted actions.

The Middle Way appreciation reveals a spacious detachment from self-absorbed references. Note how the body/mind self-identification wanes. Concentrated and focused, emptiness from pursued pleasures, not found satisfying, or indulged as another self-attachment. The knotted complexity, self-conceit and accompanying restlessness are dropped. A threefold balance of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration along with insight-wisdom, the Middle Way experience directs you to an emptiness release and recognition of the selfless nature of reality.

I'm attached as self and find self in everything. Without self, I'm free. I don't have to be stuck on a self-fixation. I can be released.

April 19—Emptying the Hourglass*

“You should train yourselves: ‘We will enter and remain in the emptiness that is pure, superior, and unsurpassed.’” MN 121

An hourglass-like filled with impulsive and distracting habitual energies, attention is compromised and understanding deceived by self-identification.

Centered and connected on the breath’s quality, feel the calming and gradual shift away from the self-burdened actor. The burdensome body/mind identification slowly begins to diffuse through a Middle Way appreciation. As the subconscious monologue quiets down, note the release from the many demands and how persisting habit energies subside. The mind naturally settles on the breath awareness as Initial Contact and goes on to unify as One-Pointed Clarity. Experienced is relief and unburdening from the clung to self actor. Sense the dispersing and spaciousness as self gives way to a released, open-flowing conscious awareness. Here discerned and experienced is the emptiness as non-self recognition for the many actions in the ‘one’ or self. Known is emptiness as freedom and cessation from self-reference.

Sensory overload and contacted action settled, meditation is a Wisely Reflected personal experience for self-preoccupation. The body weakens, feelings are pleasant, painful or neutral, perception identifies and judges, mental reactions reflect a collection of personal experiences, and conscious attention mistakes life-actions as self, all arising and fading—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self impersonal nature. Now open to the non-self emptiness realization and breakthrough cessation from self-reference. This isn’t an exercise in logic or imaginative abilities, but an actual Middle Way penetration from self extremes to discern life and reality as they truly are.

Settled and relaxed, follow as the mind naturally goes on to experience and discern the Fine-Material Awareness or jhanas: the Seclusion Absorption moves away from physical sense-contacted stimulation to a realization for non-self emptiness; the Concentration Absorption as the mind draws back from the overt body-mind identification to a refined One-Pointed Clarity and deepened appreciation for non-self emptiness; the Equanimity Absorption is experienced as settling from the gross Sense Realm identification to a refined awareness not plagued by impulsiveness and temporarily halting self-promoted actions; and the Detachment Absorption isn’t

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plagued by a mundane pain or pleasure related to the senses, but resides in clear-minded distinction as emptiness and the cessation from overt self-reference.

Through the Fine-Material Awareness, distinguish the role of purposeful action as conditions, pressures, influences and elements go on to form each of these refined states. However blissful they may be, nevertheless the absorption experience is impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature.

Previously, the present moment and the breath were taken for granted. Insight Meditation not only reveals a self-misunderstanding but also a non-self 'emptiness' and cessation as freedom. Meditation isn't about falling into a trance or tuning out life, but follows as Wise Reflection to discern liberation from self-obsessed suffering ways.

I see how self weighs me down, keeps me distracted, excited and off balance. Connected and aware, releasing my self-attachments, I realize and open to non-self freedom.

April 20—Direct Attention *

“Then the monk should direct his mind to some satisfactory image. When the mind is directed to some satisfactory image, happiness is born. From this happiness, joy is then born. With a joyful mind, the body relaxes. A relaxed body feels content, and the mind of one content becomes concentrated. He then reflects: “The purpose for which I directed my my mind has been accomplished. So now I shall withdraw [directed attention from the image].” He withdraws, and no longer thinks upon or thinks about [the image]. He understands: “I am not thinking upon or thinking about [anything]. Inwardly mindful, I am content.” This is directed meditation.” SN 47, 10

The practical application of ‘direct awareness’ is used when the mind is distracted, and unsettled and ‘clear awareness’ acknowledging when the mind is focused.

Simply follow the affecting mental energy. Note how self-associated stress and tension has you knotted up (work, family pressures and daily demands weigh heavily). Notice how thoughts flash to trigger a barrage of mental disturbances. Bearing down on the thought, stress is amplified (breathing rough, forehead and eye pressure as well as abdominal tension). As a Middle Way appreciation without reacting or being critical, recognize the conflicting thoughts. Smile and relax, discharging the habitual buildup. Applying ‘direct awareness,’ note the changes in the breath from heavy and tension-filled to settling down and relaxing. Aware of both the body and mind, move away from demanding, intension filled self-associations to a Middle Way appreciation. Acknowledge the charged stress slowly dispersing.

Settled into the meditation, follow the body for related symptoms and pressures. Dropping the lower jaw helps stretch facial muscles. Allow the shoulders and back to relax. Note how the mind clenches around a thought and how the body tightens up. Through a Middle Way appreciation self-associated stress begins to free up. Allow the habitual tension to go on and disperse out through the head, torso and limbs. Insight Meditation is a realization and understanding.

A longer body scan helps restlessness subside. Smile as habits discharge. Note the changes in the breath’s quality from tension filled to relaxing and calm. Having awareness for the body and mind, detach from dominating and stifling habits. The world turns, events spin, but there is no need to respond. As a Middle Way appreciation for life, experience a transforming awareness—a calm and quiet relief

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without self-promoted involvement. Below the level of distraction and impulsiveness there is awareness and insight. Feel how the breath is relaxed and refreshed. Aware of the many subtle experiences, Insight Meditation is a realization of life. There is patience for and relief from self-centered behavior.

Acknowledge the Middle Way's balanced approach. As thought impressions flash, note whether the instance is desiring, hateful or confusing along with associated pleasant, painful or neutral feelings. A Middle Way appreciation, observe the thought without judgment, criticism or reacting to a clarifying 'direct attention.' Recognize how the mind contracts as habitual energies dominate. Connected with the present, gently relax the thought. Feel the change as the mind opens and releases the one-sided self focus.

A thought is actually a narrowed self-association reacting to a situation or experience. The Middle Way realization reveals life without self-intrusion or domination. Feel the tranquility not only during meditation, but also carrying over to daily activities. Whatever the situation, apply the useful technique of 'direct attention.' Be your own benefactor. After all, you know yourself best.

Amazingly, everything has stopped. I can't believe that I'm actually this settled. Nothing seems to be happening. There is only now and the breath. My body relaxes and my mind clears.

April 21—Clear Awareness*

“And what is undirected meditation? Not directing his mind outward, a monk understands: “My mind is not directed outward.” He understands: “Not focused on before or after; free; undirected.” And he understands: “I abide observing body as body—ardent, fully aware, mindful—I am content.” This is undirected meditation.” SN 47, 10

One instinctively knows when to rest, catch one’s breath and sit back. Meditation is all about awareness and being connected to what is happening physically and mentally. Nothing is taken for granted. Exposed is a self-domination. Through a Middle Way appreciation, recognize the tormenting extremes as insight for life.

A present-minded connection, ‘clear awareness’ is recognized. A grounded awareness for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions, realize the self tug-of-war taking place. Through a Middle Way guidance one is patient and centered, realizing an undistracted and uninvolved ‘clear awareness.’

The breath is an initial contact. Recognized is when one is undisturbed or clear minded. Acknowledge the natural flow of the breath as well as the open-flowing attention. Note the absence of self-preoccupied greed, hatred and confusion. The breath and body relax, feelings subside, the mind settles and life-actions are undisturbed. Clear Awareness recognizes the present as settled, calm, focused and mindful. Self-impulsiveness abates. Disengaged from sense-impressed reactions, renunciation and restraint stand out. Join with the relief, happiness and clarity that are the moment.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact follows the breath’s settled quality; Sustained Contact recognizes the Clear Awareness; Interest distinguishes the calm focus; ‘Joy’ as the breath is a recognized tranquility; and having One-Pointed Clarity is abiding in the undisturbed awareness. At ease through a refined and settled Middle Way appreciation, acknowledge the absence of impulsive habits and the Monkey Mind distractions.

A Middle Way appreciation, when not engaged as a self actor there is no conflict or stress. Self-bias doesn’t intrude and cloud the mind. Time slows as a present life recognition. Quiet, relieved and undistracted, feel how the mind opens, is aware and

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engages as insight. Note the absence of the self-pressure to judge and be at odds with. 'Clear awareness' is part of life, too.

When not self-distracted and absorbed, I'm at ease, settled and happy.

April 22—Wise Reflection and the Self Actor*

“...What is a mirror for? In the same way bodily actions, verbal actions, and mental actions are to be done with repeated reflection.” MN 61

Self follows carelessness and the suffering impact of greed, hatred and confusion. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation align with the Five Wise Actions as insight for life. One is aware and connected whether actions through mind, speech or body are detrimental, unwholesome and unwise or beneficial, wholesome and wise. Whether directed to one's self or others, if your intention is lacking on any level then stop before committing the act. The subconscious revealed, Wise Action reveals intentions and where one is headed. Wisely Reflecting, discern where actions are taking you. Self-directed thoughts are negative, harsh, punishing and have ulterior motives.

Affecting subconscious habits and further weakening the tie to the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification, the Five Wise Actions (or precepts) are a personally realization and call for responsibility.

Goodwill—Patient, accepting, flexible, tolerant and secure one has a kind nature. Concerned and respectful rather than indifferent or hateful, one's demeanor is friendly.

Honest—Being truthful and straight forward, one is trusted by others. Realizing the power of the spoken word, one is less likely to blurt things out.

Generosity—Open, generous and giving, one shares as much as possible. But also shares one's time through favors and kind acts.

Abstinence—If not involved in an intimate relationship, reflect on whether one is at ease with the present solitary situation or is disturbed and yearning. Compassionate rather than lustful, through abstinence one is caring, respectful and benevolent towards others.

Sobriety—Life is already enough of a challenge. Don't make things worse by drug and alcohol indulgence. Drugs cover up deep emotional problems, abuse and insecurities. Meditation is a natural and wholesome reflective healing. One is controlled and empowered rather than weak and a victim.

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A subconscious monologue comes to light as greedy, hateful and confusing voices gnaw away. Following a regular meditation practice, applying the Five Wise Actions directed by Wise Reflection to see how one clings to a body/mind association formed around the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Now discerning and Wisely Reflecting, the body, feelings, perception, mental reactions, and conscious attention aren't taken as I, me or mine, but are rightly experienced as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature.

I have to always be on guard. Self is sneaky and troubling. I easily get taken in. I catch myself then direct myself through Wise Action.

April 23—A Creature of Habit*

“Whatever a [person] keeps pursuing with his thinking and pondering, that becomes the inclination of his awareness. If a [person] keeps pursuing thinking imbued with sensuality, abandoning thinking imbued with renunciation, his mind is bent by that thinking imbued with sensuality. If a [person] keeps pursuing thinking imbued with ill will, abandoning thinking imbued with non-ill will, his mind is bent by that thinking imbued with ill will. If a [person] keeps pursuing thinking imbued with harmfulness, abandoning thinking imbued with harmlessness, his mind is bent by that thinking imbued with harmfulness.” MN 19

The body/mind association that is the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification is closer to an actor performing. Most times one impulsively acts out. One eats and stuffs one’s self with the most convenient high calorie fat and sugar intake (not to mention how people ply themselves with alcohol and drugs); a one-sided perception only takes into account what is convenient, seeking out satisfying goals and non-threatening situations; feelings are over indulged or brushed aside when boring; mental reactions as greed, hatred and confusion are expressed; and a self-directed conscious attention dominates.

Now with meditation as a focal point, life is seen and understood—as purposeful actions joining together. Settled, focused and discerning, follow the breath’s quality. Note the inherent stress and pressures associated with the body/mind obsession. The body, feelings, perception, mental reactions, and conscious attention are impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self impersonal nature.

At the center of it all is craving after (for desire, for self-identification or as an escape), joining past, present and future actions. Like a bee one goes from one encounter and experience to the next seeking out and extracting to uphold a self-ideal. Sense how craving’s impulse is unsettling and leads to fulfilling a self-ideal. Note the dissatisfaction and how suffering consequences play out. No matter what you do or how hard you try, disappointment is experienced. Impermanence is jarring and keeps one on the lookout and on the run. The Five Remembrances are a valid and sobering recollection (sickness, aging, death, loss and responsibility for your actions) and denote a non-self wake up call. Without any unique or individual source or self-character, the many actions give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self.

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Slowly begin to release the accumulated habitual buildup of the self actor. Patience is known through meditation as equanimity from self-dominated pursuits. Note craving's urgency (desire is insatiable, self-identification keeps one off balance, or seeking to escape from a situation). Acknowledge how the chattering subconscious dialogue quiets down. Greed, hatred and confusion subside.

Follow meditation as a Wise Reflection for life. Habitual instincts are dropped. A creature of habit, discerned is the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification as a non-self insightful recognition.

I see who I've been as a self actor. There wasn't anything I wouldn't do to make myself happy, but it never lasted. I see how out of control I've been.

Life Practice

April 24—Take a Break from Being a Self Actor*

Take a break from being a self actor—from greed, hatred and confusion. Like a puppet on a string, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are compromising as a non-stop frenzy of judgments, bias and careless actions. The breath reflects a self-suffocating stress, upheaval and exhaustion. Challenged and tense, realize how underlying subconscious habits are disturbing and provoking. Acknowledge the accompanying physical signs as well as mental strain. Wound up and self-involved, having to be self isn't easy. You don't have to be the person you think you are—not even for yourself!

Recognize the struggling both physically and mentally. Feel where and how one clings and is attached. Note how the mind narrows, is stressed and tied to a body/mind identification. Acknowledge the charged habitual energies, and the unsettling of the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention). Turn away from worldly distractions to a Middle Way appreciation not related to self extremes.

Recognize how the six senses make-up the present—sensitive to distinguishing light and forms (eyes/sight), noise vibration (ears/sound), scents (nose/smell), flavor (tongue/taste), cold or warmth (skin/tactile), thoughts arising and fading (mind/conscious attention). Each sense contact is communicated through conditions, pressures, influences and elements, but isn't self. As a Middle Way appreciation, note the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self. Acknowledge the relief from having separated from self.

Follow the shift as suffocating habits slowly begin to disperse. Awareness settles naturally to a focused Fine-Material Awareness: Seclusion Absorption as sense-contacted domination diminishes; through the Concentration Absorption the mind draws back from an overt body/mind identification to a refined One-Pointed Clarity and detachment; the Equanimity Absorption as settling from the grosser Sense Realm identity to a refined awareness not consumed by mundane impulses; and the Detachment Absorption not to be plagued by overt pain or pleasure but having a clear-minded distinction for non-self emptiness as self-reference is released.

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Through Insight Meditation and a Middle Way appreciation, a non-self insight is experienced—not I, mine, or self; nor identified, delighted or pursued as a past, present or future self-association. Follow as self-attachments fall away.

Recognize the sticky and painful burden involved with being a self actor. Realize how underlying subconscious impulses generate detrimental actions. Know how the body/mind identification for self is compromised through by the Three Poisons (greed, hatred and confusion). The full scope of self-suffering stands out—sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair.

Try having a little humor for your many foibles and follies. Be patient and forgiving. Applying Wise Reflection, turn away from careless impulses to be aware and responsible.

What's so special about myself? Self is like slipping on a banana peel. Oops...I did it again! Being aware, I understand my self-limitations.

April 25—Self and the Subconscious*

Sidetracked by self-identification, realize the frustration and stress involved. Note how breathing is heavy and labored to the point of suffocation. The jaw is clenched, a migraine headache throbs, eyes burn or itch, and a nervousness churns at the stomach. Self-obsession is an actual affront. Follow the breath's quality as it slowly moves away from self-identification to a settled Middle Way appreciation. A non-self insight and release from self-promoted actions stand out.

Wisely Reflecting, the subconscious is exposed. Greed, hatred and confusion play out as dormant, active and transgressing actions. Revealed is self as undermining and a suffering experience. Following purposeful action, nothing happens on a whim or randomly, but comes to fruition because one made it happen. Everything points to self-illusion and the accompanying downfall. Recognize the self-symptoms charging one physically and mentally. Slowly release the hourglass-like of accumulated habits. Greed is dizzying, hatred smoldering, and confusion is a deluded affect. Note the ongoing self-prattle echoing in the mind. Here the subconscious is revealed.

The self actor is spurred by misunderstanding life and careless actions follow. The Middle Way threefold application of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and now the emphasis of insight-wisdom, is a release from self-reference. Acknowledge how self-association shrinks through a Middle Way intuition. Non-self insight is experienced (the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self). As a true recognition and personal insight, the body/mind identification doesn't send one over-the-top as greedy, hateful and confusing self-promoted fireworks.

Follow the shift as suffocating habits slowly begin to disperse. Awareness settles naturally to a focused Fine-Material Awareness: Seclusion Absorption as sense-contacted domination diminishes; through the Concentration Absorption the mind draws back from the overt body/mind identification to a refined One-Pointed Clarity; the Equanimity Absorption as settling from the grosser Sense Realm identity to a refined awareness not consumed by mundane impulses; and the Detachment Absorption not to be plagued by overt pain or pleasure, but having a clear-minded distinction for non-self emptiness as self-reference is released.

My life is settled. I'm able to see through my self-commotion and habits. I don't have to follow as a self actor.

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April 26—The Wise Action for Non-Self*

Non-self doesn't mean that one should just go out and live it up because there is no real self to worry about. That would be irresponsible. As soon as the good times run out one would just be back to being unhappy, craving and in search of further amusement. This would be the same old self-associated downfall connected with the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Overlooked is the non-self insight as emptiness clarifying life and reality and the release from self-reference. You don't become another person (a 'non-self' individual), but rather through a Middle Way appreciation understand self-centered motives and how the self actor forms from misunderstanding life and reality. As a guideline to stopping suffering, Wise Reflection as well as applying renunciation and restraint, the Five Wise Actions direct one away from self-promoted actions. Renunciation means giving up detrimental, unproductive habits. Recognized is the subconscious and the awareness for dormant, active and transgressing potentials; going from carelessness and being impulsive to insightful and wise.

A personal intuition, realize impermanence, dissatisfaction and suffering, and the non-self nature. Why fight with a self that doesn't exist? When one stops struggling, demanding, having unreasonable expectations, self-identification is stopped, non-self insight is realized and self-domination released.

Sensing anger, breathe deeply and take note of the physical and mental affects. Be patient and try not to be outraged. Connect with Wise Reflection. Smiling through the tension helps bring stress down a notch. Remember to have goodwill and kindness rather than speak or act harshly. Acknowledge the deeper habitual intentions affecting one. Realizing the hourglass-like buildup, slowly allow the frustration to relax and disperse. Put the brakes on self-indulgence and greed by applying renunciation and restraint. The Five Wise Actions are an insight for life. A Middle Way appreciation is better late than not at all. The true, non-self nature of life and reality is known.

Being my self is exhausting. I'm aware how I get side-tracked and overwhelmed. I feel relief as I open to non-self insight and release my self-domination.

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April 27—Freeing the Three Poisons*

Like heading down a swift, flowing stream towards a cascade, there is a mindful moment to turn away from the turbulent fallout rather than stay on course to say or do something regretful. A present awareness and Middle Way appreciation connects one with the present. Non-self insight and release from self-obsession are known.

Conscious of the subconscious voice whispering inside the mind, the Three Poisons form as habit patterns. Note the self actor urgency to think, speak and act. Knee-jerk reactions for greed, hatred and confusion reflect self-domination.

Greed is an unsettling desire to gratify sensual pleasure and prolong pleasant experiences. Eye stimulation is indulged, ears follow soothing sounds, the nose is tickled by scents, the tongue experiences enjoyable tastes, a fondness for tactile stimulation, and Monkey Mind distractions affect the mind.

Hatred is a self-righteous indignation arising when something doesn't conform to self wishes or expectations. Fear and aversion are connected to hatred and anger. Unpleasant and painful sense experiences are frustrating and send one reeling. Acting out of self-defense, arguing, and fighting, self-image is defended and upheld.

Confusion strikes as worry, doubt, insecurity and misunderstanding. Taking life to be self is the catalyst for one's bewilderment and suffering. Irrational and closer to insane, a self actor struggles.

Insight Meditation isn't only about sitting to feel good, but is a Middle Way appreciation as insight into the self-charade. The self actor takes part in the worldly stage and experiences gain/loss, fame/dishonor, pleasure/pain, and praise/blame. Self-expressed greed, hatred and confusion makes one a victim.

Meditating, connect with patience. Aware and relaxed, desire is defused through renunciation, anger through goodwill, and patience as equanimity brings a calm understanding to confusion. Wisely Reflecting, a personal understanding for life and reality is known. Exposed is the self actor and rambling subconscious dialogue. But there is also the non-self insight from self-domination. An intuitive experience, a non-self release is followed. Meditation, patience, renunciation and restraint, Wise Reflection and the Middle Way appreciation clarify life as self-obsession is dropped.

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*I'm not the same person I was four months ago when I started Insight Meditation.
I'm patient and not carried away by anger. I feel as my self-burden has released.*

April 28—The Five Groups*

Yes, there is a body. Feelings are experienced. Perception takes place. Mental reactions as well as conscious attention are engaged. But each is non-self as many actions join to give the illusion of the 'one' or self. Only as a body/mind association and craving after are the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification a burden and domination: the body is energized and made vital through nourishment; feelings are engaged through sense-contacted stimulation of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, touch and mind; perception for a subject-object identification is made; deep-seated mental reactions and habits emerge; conscious attention recognizes ongoing life-action. Non-self insight, realizes life and reality as they are—non-self.

Purposeful action or karma (to be detailed in May) weighs heavily, defining and dictating the direction life takes. An imposing challenge, a secure foothold is sought, but impermanence reveals otherwise. In denial, suffering ways are futilely followed in order to fulfill a self actor.

Non-self is a wake-up call. One is duped by an attachment for the body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention. Bubbles, foam, a mirage, intangible, a magic show, the self-emperor without clothes is exposed. This isn't a dismissal, but a Wise Reflection and understanding for life and reality without any individual self-characteristic. The Five Groups are impermanent, an illusion non-self. Self is an obsession and addiction.

Follow the shift as suffocating habits slowly begin to disperse. Awareness settles naturally to a focused Fine-Material Awareness: Seclusion Absorption as sense-contacted domination diminishes; through the Concentration Absorption the mind draws back from an overt body/mind identification to a refined One-Pointed Clarity; the Equanimity Absorption as settling from the grosser Sense Realm identity to a refined awareness not consumed by mundane impulses; and the Detachment Absorption not to be plagued by overt pain or pleasure, but having a clear-minded distinction for non-self emptiness as self-reference is released.

A Middle Way appreciation not connected with self extremes, one doesn't go on to make a self out of non-self. As a personal insight, self-reference is penetrated and released.

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Self is so much work. There are times I don't even want to be myself! As I turn away from the Five Groups, my self-burden diminishes.

April 29—From Emptiness to Non-Self Freedom*

Separating from a self-absorbed reference, now recognize the toll self takes as physical stress, sickness and psychological suffering. Following and maturing as a Wisely Reflected personal intuition, discern the ongoing body/mind communication and self-obsessed ordeal. The subconscious revealed, acknowledge how greed, hatred and confusion dominate. Greed is experienced as unsettling and restlessness, hatred as fear and anger; and confusion as doubt and worry. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are mistaken as permanent, satisfying and self.

Settled and focusing through a body scan, Wise Reflection stands out. Following the breath's quality, distinguished are the body elements as nourished from external sources; feelings as pleasant, painful and neutral generated sense-impressions; the mind as afflicted by external sources; and life-actions as phenomena in general arises and fades.

Now turn away from a self-absorbed focus to a non-self emptiness realization. Through a settled breath quality and mental recognition, experience the release and dispersing of self-associated habits, physical well being and the mind release to know emptiness as freedom from self-promoted friction. The Middle Way appreciation isn't involved in self extremes for indulgence and aggression. Wisely Reflecting, connect with non-self emptiness and the release from self-reference. Sense the freeing up and falling away of self-obsession as detachment, tranquility, and release. A non-self freedom stands out.

Self has been my all-consuming focus. Meditation settles me to reveal that life is far different than I assumed.

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April 30—Following the Middle Way*

While self is an illusion, one doesn't fight with or seek to destroy what is in fact a charade. The Middle Way directs one away from the silliness and hysteria that is the self actor. Renunciation and restraint aid in helping cope with self-excess. Wisely Reflecting and applying Wise Action, bring one to understanding and freedom as self-domination is released.

Insight Meditation allows for awareness and sensitivity as well as patience and understanding: the body is to be cared for but not over indulged; feelings are felt but not clung to; perception is engaged but not as a discriminating; mental reactions arise and are recognized; and conscious attention is experienced and rightly understood rather than mistaken as self. As a practical and grounded meditation application and personal insight, Wise Action as responsibility is taken for thoughts, speech and actions; from being careless and impulsive to discerning and wise.

Connected with the present moment, the breath quality reveals physical well being and mental tranquility. The Middle Way intensifies as a deeper appreciation for life. Subconscious habits are affected and subdued. Life and reality are recognized as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Wisely Reflecting, control and wisdom are known.

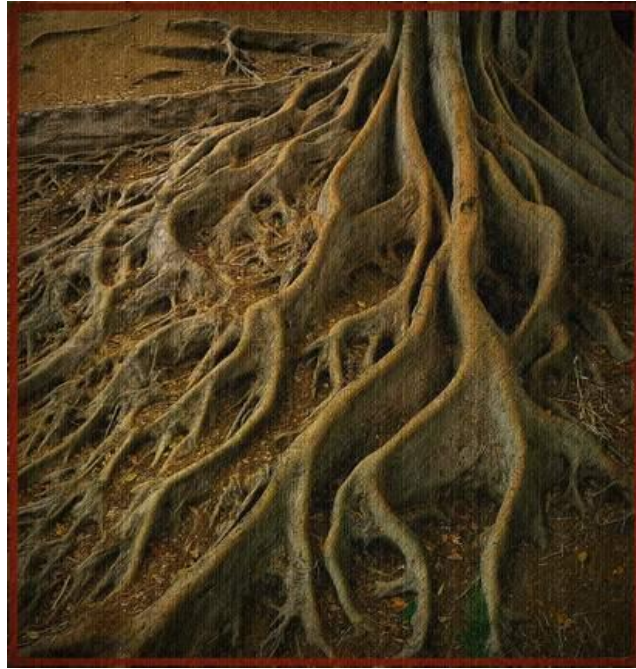
Follow the shift as suffocating habits disperse. Awareness settles naturally to a focused Fine-Material Awareness: Seclusion Absorption as sense-contacted domination diminishes; though the Concentration Absorption the mind draws back from an overt body/mind identification to a refined One-Pointed Clarity; the Equanimity Absorption as settling from the grosser Sense Realm identity to a refined awareness not consumed by mundane impulses; and the Detachment Absorption not to be plagued by overt pain or pleasure but having a clear-minded distinction for non-self emptiness as self-reference is released.

My life is understood and made easier through meditation. Now patient, I'm aware of what I'm doing and where I'm headed. Self isn't dominating me as before.

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**May—
The Kaleidoscope of Karma,
The Compelling Motives Leading to Action**



Karma literally means action and when looking at your life's actions it begins, has first expression and is channeled through motivated self-based habits (greed, hatred and confusion). These intentions go on to lead one to unwise or wise experiences. Suffering or well being is directed as purposeful action.

Karma is often misunderstood as a far out eastern foolishness. Things are dismissed when they aren't immediately understood or pertinent. What is seen, heard, smelled, tasted, touched, and thought are all that one cares to know. This is a limited view of life—a self-view. But the eyes can't see infra-red light yet they exist. The ears can't hear the higher frequency that most animals do. Smell, taste and touch are also weak, while mental cognition is limited and dominated by strong habits and Monkey Mind distractions.

The thought before the thought or action, karma is specifically how as a self actor motives or will drives thoughts, speech and actions. As a self actor there is a certain disposition or tendency to act out of greed, hatred and confusion-related (the Five Wise Actions as insight incline to awareness, and positive responsible actions). Begun as a self-confusion of life and reality, habit energies are very much alive and carry over to have far reaching consequences. There is no destiny or fate, but personal responsibility, free will and choices are involved. Previously, one was careless, but now is mindful. Through Insight Meditation an impulsive habitual nature and conflicts are reduced.

Meditating you are aware, have Wise Reflection and are grounded by a Middle Way appreciation. Revealed are dormant, active and transgressing habits. No longer carelessly and impulsively driven as a self actor, insight for one's intentions and actions is experienced. Modern psychology refers to the subconscious, but Insight Meditation goes on to reveal a self-delusion. The many actions join to give the illusion of the 'one' or self, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention) are a self-fantasy while non-self insight is a true recognition of life and reality without self-reference.

On the universal scale, purposeful action is in the background as the driving architecture shaping the cosmos. Everything has its forces of conditions, pressures, influences and elements urging and compelling it on as interacting with energies. The effects are an arising, stickiness, stretching in transformation, pulling apart and fading. Instinctive and habitual acts are connected to a primordial evolution providing the spark promoting life-actions in general. Whether it is as a human, animal, plant, vegetable or mineral, each in its own way (even the elemental forces of earth, water, temperature and air) is dominated, influenced and shaped by purposeful action.

In regards to your own personal experiences, karma is the longstanding habitual energy as a self actor driving one to act out. A one-sided self-illusion dominates. This mistaken self-view of reality taints thoughts and actions. The past joins with the present and goes on to affect the future, having far reaching consequences. Note how a flashing, self-driven conceit and restless energy dominate actions.

Karma isn't a point of debate or a philosophical curiosity but is real. Just as a fire has embers that flame, spark and continue to burn, karma smolders and carries over as habitual affected energies. The karma connection becomes clear during meditation as one tries to settle down. Racing thoughts, wild fantasies, sexual desires as well as anger and confusion stand out. From an off base body/mind obsession, a self-pursuit dominates. It can be difficult and painful to face up to this sobering reality. But now patient, determined and have a discerning Wise Reflection, one recognizes and releases self-obsessed actions, Dictating life is karma's imposing influence.

May 1—Connecting with Karma*

“Beings are the owners of their karma [motives or intentions], heir to their karma, born of their karma, related through their karma, and have their karma as their arbitrator. Karma is what creates distinctions among beings in terms of coarseness and refinement.” MN 135

Wild thoughts can suddenly flash up. The incredible and unimaginable erupts and you don't have a clue why such a jumble of thoughts, emotions, feelings and memories appeared? Who is this person thinking such outlandish, far-fetched and perverse thoughts? Why can't the mind or life be controlled?

Meditation can be a challenge because of the whirlwind of spinning thoughts. No sooner has one sat down does a subconscious prattle reveal itself as well as the Monkey Mind distractions invade. In part, the mind likes to be busy as an alert, thinking and conscious experience. But this hum of mental gibberish also reflects motives and how self-absorbed ways go on to form life-action. The karma connection becomes clearer during meditation when first trying to calm down and concentrate as a self-obsession dominates.

The four psychological components of the Five Groups interact and play out as feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention. The mind is inquisitive, inspects, deciphers and labels, acts and reacts to actions and experiences. One simply doesn't know how to control, deal with, guide or turn this karmic potential off. Insight Meditation is a recourse. Begin by relaxing the body and the same is done for the mind. It may be difficult and a challenge to face up to unflattering personal weaknesses, but the pain and torment of ignoring these careless habits is far more detrimental and leads to suffering. Wise Reflection puts things into perspective. Aware of self-attachments, reality is foreign and distant. The Three Poisons (greed, hatred and confusion) are a self-expressed downfall.

Sit calmly with the many ongoing feelings and flashing thoughts. View them as though watching a stage show or a movie. Don't judge, discriminate, hate or be frightened by the karmic kaleidoscope (the thought before the thought or action). Simply regard how habit energies flash. Reflected are the attachments for a body/mind self-association. Each person carries around his or her own personal baggage of problems, insecurities and torments (and the same is true of beneficial actions). Feel how self-absorption leads one astray. No one is without some

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confusion, wounding or scarring. Follow as awareness intensifies as Wise Reflection to discern the role of purposeful action.

Settled and centered, the habitual buildup of karmic intent flashes. Greed, hatred and confusion play out over dormant, active, and transgressing stages. Note as the breath reflects a self-directed pressure and strain while the body is tense and the mind races unsettled. The thought before the thought or action, note the ongoing mental dialogue. In turn motivates to think, speak and act emerge. Without interacting, follow how the self actor is driven to impulsive actions. A pretty face sparks sexual longing and fantasies. A tense moment brings out anger, fear or insecurity. This is karma as compelling habitual actions—the thought before the thought or action. Follow how self-directed habits and impulses tumble through the mind to then go on and form into decided actions. The many thoughts are simply tendencies and potentials of what could happen and might play out. Wisely Reflecting discern the rambling, mental monologue. Here you consciously realize and direct choices from careless to responsible actions. Wise Action intervenes (goodwill, generosity, truthfulness, compassion and sobriety).

Meditating and aware of the restless energy, craving is noted (desire, self-identity or as an escape). Karma's tormenting repercussions are discerned. Over time habitual tendencies are curbed. Wise Reflection intensifies as a non-self recognition to realize the role of purposeful action. The present moment is followed through a Middle Way appreciation rather than self extremes indulging in desire or aggression.

Awareness Penetrations as insight: Initial Contact connects with the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact follows the stream of self-obsessed consciousness; Interest identifies the specific habit energy; 'Joy' as a Middle Way appreciation settles the thought impression; and having One-Pointed Clarity as Wise Reflection discerns self-charged actions.

I feel how my non-stop mental jabbering dominates me. I didn't realize the influence and power karma has over my life.

May 2—The Thought Before the Thought or Action*

“Mind precedes all mental states. Mind is their chief; they are all mind-wrought. If with an impure mind a person speaks or acts, suffering follows him...” DH 1

Sit and feel the present moment energy or disposition—stressed, happy, relieved, anxious or neutral. Connected and playing off one another, be aware how the body/mind communicate. Note the breath’s quality, facial tension, clenched jaw as well as the tightening of the abdominal muscles and pelvic area. Sense the general uneasiness karma has as a mental dialogue. Acknowledge the flashing, self-directed conceit as well as restlessness. Feel the underlying pressure as a self-identity is clung to. Slowly begin to feel the shift away from self-absorbed distractions to a settled Middle Way recognition.

Gently direct awareness towards the mind. Note the recurring conversation echoing in the head. This is the compelling habitual urgency of motives or karma. Follow how intentions ferment and form as self-promotion. Note how a self-obsession stirs. The Three Poisons as dormant, active and transgressing habitual potentials come alive under the right conditions and circumstances. In turn greedy, hateful and confusing impulses dominate. Follow how the mind flourishes through day-dreaming, fantasies, plotting and self-absorbed scenarios. Note how motives flare-up to dominate and are overwhelming.

Settling meditating, feel what it is like NOT to react. As an intensified awareness, Wise Reflection discerns the non-self reality that is the many actions giving the illusion of the ‘one’ or self. The subconscious exposed, the thought before the thought or action, karma is revealed as habit-driven motives. Karma’s restless dialogue dominates day and night. The self-illusion exposed, Wise Reflection is followed as an insight realization for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Family, friends, peer pressure, schooling, cultural influences and traditions and ongoing experiences stir together to make for a self-image.

Acknowledge the habitual buildup. Note the breath’s quality as self-stifled and repressing. Relax the pressured fixation absorbing you. Greed is unsettled and driven to search, hatred is defensive and combative, and confusion disturbs as worry and doubt. Follow how the thought before the thought or action flashes seeking outlet and expression.

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The chattering, habit-voice slowly settles and gives way to a calm, non-self realization; from self-preoccupied to insight recognition. The realization and penetration of karma reveals how suffering comes about. This isn't a self-substitution or self-repression but an experienced knowing and release from the Five Groups self-obsession as well as habitual domination. Wisely Reflecting, the self-illusion is disarmed.

Awareness Penetrations as insight: Initial Contact connects with the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact follows the stream of self-obsessed consciousness; Interest acknowledges the driving urgency behind the thought and how motives form; 'Joy' as a Middle Way appreciation turns away to settle the thought impression; and having One-Pointed Clarity as Wisely Reflect discerns self-related actions.

Meditation is amazing—revealing. I bring control to my life and my self-dominated ways.

May 3—Generating Karma*

“Where [self attached] consciousness does not take a hold nor grow, there will be no occurrence of [the misperception of] mind-and-body, there is no growth of karma-formations [motives]. Where there is no growth of karma-formations [motives] there is no future arising of renewed existence. Where there is no future arising of renewed existence, there is no future birth, decay and death. This, I say, is free of sorrow of anguish and despair [suffering].” SN 12, 64

Attached to a body/mind identification, self-promoted actions arise at every moment. Listen to the inner dialogue as needs, dislikes, fears and confusion are plotted out. What I wouldn't do for...I don't want that...I can't handle this...He/she is the person of my dreams. A self-image is forever being reinforced.

Self is an obsession and addiction (even while sleeping!). Compelling, habit-actions dominate. 'Birth' is given to careless actions, leading to suffering consequences. A veritable self-producing factory, pieced together is a body/mind identity (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention).

Each self-directed thought, inclination, fantasy, like and dislike as well as all past and current associations and experiences, leaves a habitual imprint on consciousness and forms as a personality. A conceit and frenzied restlessness shudders through the subconscious. Past actions join in the present, the present actions then carry over as future manifestations forging a seductive self-portrait. The thought before the thought or action, a self actor is born.

Why is this? Pleasure is derived (or sought after it) as a body/mind association. Desire, a self-identity, or an escape are craved. A one-sided misunderstanding distorts reality. Delusion is on such a grand scale that self-illusion seems real. Self is all that is lived for. When egos collide, sides are taken, arguments erupt, lies are told, insults tossed about, and even wars go on to break out.

Settled and centered, below the calm level are dormant, active and transgressing self-potentials. Insight Meditation exposes the subconscious as self-promoting actions carry over. Acknowledge how the mind as a self-pursuit darts about. Feel how conceit is a forged pressure. As a breath awareness, sense the subtle stress and habitual buildup. Feel the agitation as a self-vision is pursued and developed. Habits drive a self-fantasy. Note the restlessness as craving for desire and an

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identity. Never a moment's rest, an ongoing self-attachment continues. Wisely Reflecting, realize the ongoing karmic urgency.

Gently relax the self-absorbed attention. Breath quality calm, body tranquil, mentally one is keenly aware. Feel as the habitual buildup disperses and mental dialogue subsides. Self-directed habits have momentarily ceased. A non-self insight stands out. Without karma's urgency, the mind rests detached from self-fabrication.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact connect with the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact follows the self-obsessed stream of consciousness; Interest notes the urgency forming as intentions; 'Joy' as a Middle Way turns away to separate from the thought impression; and having One-Pointed Clarity Wise Reflection discerns self-related actions.

Habits dominate my life. I'm aware and listen to the voice in my head. I realize how I absentmindedly go on to behave.

May 4—Acting on Karma*

“These four types of karma have been understood, realized, and made known by me. Which four? There is karma that is dark with dark result; karma that is bright with bright result; karma that is dark and bright with dark and bright result; and karma that is neither dark nor bright with neither dark nor bright result, leading to the ending of karma” AN 4, 232

Karma has ‘dark and light’ characteristics—unwise, careless, and morally unworthy or wise, responsible and morally worthy. Dark karma is based on greed, hatred and confusion. Light Karma is based on generosity, goodwill and understanding. Behind the chattering monologue, experience motivated habitual actions. Karma resonates to direct and affect life.

Karma is like a magnet. Whatever action done will likely attract a similar reaction. People literally carry around with them their karma or motives (clothes, jewelry, hair styles, cars, homes and obviously their demeanor for good will or the lack there of). None is better or worse, but there is a difference in intentions and where actions are leading one. Karma also has the side effect to impact others. For example, drinking and driving a person may or may not injure someone. Thoughts, words and actions are far-reaching. This is why the Five Wise Actions are of such importance—hateful or having goodwill, dishonest or truthful, selfish or generous, compassionate or lustful, sober or intoxicated. Per one’s intention, so one is—careless or wise.

Dark Karma

“[Offensive actions through body, speech or mind] Killing living beings is unwholesome; taking what is not given is unwholesome; misconduct in sensual pleasures is unwholesome; false speech is unwholesome; malicious speech is unwholesome; harsh speech is unwholesome; gossip is unwholesome; covetousness is unwholesome; ill will is unwholesome; wrong view is unwholesome.” MN 9

Through the intention to think, speak and act ten unwise-dark or unbeneficial actions lead to suffering consequences. Three are related to physical action—harming, stealing and sexual misconduct; four relate to speech—lying, slandering, speaking harshly and gossip or idle chatter; and three relate to thoughts—covetousness, ill will, and having wrong views (specifically denying the role of purposeful or moral action).

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The thought before the thought or action, feel how the energy of self-directed conceit and restlessness are a burden. Note how dormant, active and transgressing habitual potentials flash. Through the breath's quality connect to recognize the karmic forces shaping life. Note the physical tension and mental stress. Coveting, ill-will, and wrong views are detrimental. In turn you go on to lie, slander, speak harshly, or gossip. And worse, to perform harmful deeds, steal or be involved in sexual misconduct. Feel karma's urgency to act and react. The body/mind self-attachment is stressful, unsettling, and compels habitual promotion.

The self actor is literally a suffocating breath. Sense the physical manifestation as facial stress, chest pressure as well as stress at the abdomen and pelvic areas. Self is stifling and harmful. Dark Karma is careless, self-absorbed, dominated and compromised by careless habits. The effects are impatience, a quick temper and mental confusion. Bitterness, anger and fear dominate. Overwhelmed by Dark Karma, one lashes out at others, is difficult, abrasive and often out of control.

Wisely Reflecting, acknowledge the ongoing mental dialogue of unsettled impulses affecting the thought before the thought or action. Recognize how intentions spring up and in turn lead to acting out as a careless self-obsession. Unwise actions flourish as an automatic response. Feel how coveting, ill will and wrong views cloud the mind. Dominated by self-intention, in turn words form into speech as lies, slander, or gossip. Actions as harming, stealing, and as sexual misconduct are expressed. These unskillful actions have the affect of hobbling the mind to become routine habits.

Is one destined and fated to forever be tormented by karma? No. The Middle Way's conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, and insight-wisdom, is followed ending self-domination. Presently aware and Wisely Reflecting, understanding and insight begin to transform careless habits.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact connects the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact identifies Dark Karma; Interest relaxes the negative thoughts; 'Joy' feels the shift away from impulsive actions; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns self-related actions.

A tug of war is taking place inside me. Sadly, negative and careless karma win out more often than not. But now I'm aware to do something about these habits.

May 5—Acting on Karma continued*

Light Karma

“Wholesome... actions through body, speech or mind] Abstention from killing living beings is wholesome; abstention from taking what is not given is wholesome; abstention from misconduct in sensual pleasures is wholesome; abstention from false speech is wholesome; abstention from malicious speech is wholesome; abstention from harsh speech is wholesome; abstention from gossip is wholesome; non-covetousness is wholesome; non-ill will is wholesome; right view is wholesome.” MN 9

Through the intention to think, speak and act ten wise-light or beneficial actions: three relate to physical actions are engaged—goodwill, generosity, compassion; four relate to speech—truthfulness, kindness, politeness and meaningful conversation; and three relate to thoughts—content with what you have, good will, and right views (realizing the role of purposeful or moral action).

The thought before the thought or action, feel the energy of Light Karma. Note how wholesome dormant, active and transgressing potentials flash. Through the breath's quality connect to recognize the karmic forces shaping life. Note the forming of light karma as being open, aware and having Wise Reflection. Present, heedful and good natured, the effects are to be mentally alert and composed as well as patient. Goodwill, generosity, concern and caring direct life. Happy with one's self, you are friendly, easy going and flexible. A simple fulfillment, good will and right views are expressed.

Wisely Reflecting, recognize the intentions of generosity, goodwill and understanding affecting the thought before the thought or action. Settled and discerned, the mental dialogue is wholesome. Recognized is how beneficial intentions spring up and in turn lead to wise action. Experienced is control over self-obsessed ways. Karma's role has the positive side affect of affecting others. In turn honesty, kindness, and thoughtful speech as actions are based on goodwill, generosity and compassion. Self-domination dissipates. Skillful habits have the affect of controlling the mind and lead to better decision making.

Ten wise, responsible actions flourish. Sharing, goodwill and right views broaden one's perspective. In turn thoughts form as honest, complimentary and appropriate speech. Actions are kind, naturally generous, and sexually restrained.

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Insight Meditation and the Middle Way's role are to breakthrough and end the self-obsessed suffering cycle. The freedom beyond karma, a Middle Way appreciation detaches from self extremes. Brought to cessation is self-conceit, restlessness and the misguided view for life as self is clarified. The Ultimate Reality is to be experienced—Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

Awareness Penetrations as insight: Initial Contact recognizes the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact identifies the wholesome light karma; Interest relaxes to open to the positive qualities; 'Joy' as wholesome intentions direct the thought; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns self-related actions.

I follow with good intentions and behavior. I'm mindful, caring, generous and patient. I have a say in how I live my life.

May 6—Karma in Action*

“The results of karma...are not to be conjectured about, that would bring madness and vexation to anyone who conjectured about them.” AN 4, 77

The classic example of karma is that of a corralled herd of cattle. Weighty Karma is the bull or the strongest motive to come forward from the herd; Random Karma can be any one of a number of motives as a cow emerging; Proximate Karma happens to be that cow or impulse closest to the gate coming out; Habitual Karma is the lead cow as a routine reaction; and Destructive Karma is a harmful or ill-tempered cow lashing out. The focus of Insight Meditation and the Middle Way is to understand, control and bring self-promoted karma to an end.

Weighty Karma

“A man does evil deeds by going on the wrong path through desire, through hatred, through delusion, and through fear.” DN

A great deal of life has to do with ‘weighty’ or dominant karma. Greed, hatred and confusion are ongoing negative detrimental themes. One person can be unsettled by desire, another person is paralyzed by fear and insecurity; while other people have strong anger and resentment that seem to always get the better of them. The mind as conscious attention seeks to be busy and active as self-inclined habits lead to actions. The Middle Way appreciation is a non-self insight.

Weighty Karma is also important at the moment of death as the ‘final thought.’ A strong-willed habitual energy manifests itself at this time. Nasty or caring, abusive or abused, desiring or humble, cheated or generous, hateful or kind, this can carry over to a future of intense suffering or a pleasant life. Craving as desire and for as self-identity acts to link and join the past and future actions.

The thought before the thought or action, acknowledge the mental dialogue. Below the level of basic awareness is the persistent hum of self-directed conceit. Connected as a present awareness, acknowledge how overpowering habits stem from self-motivated greed, hatred and confusion. Feel the impulse to automatically react and the heavy burden charging and consuming you. Closer to an instinct, carelessness and lack of awareness dominate. Settling into the meditation, follow as Wise Reflection intensifies as a clarification for self.

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While self is composed of many actions, certain habits flourish over others to make-up a character or personality. Recognize the softly-humming, inner monologue. Note the greedy, hateful and confusing potentials. Like a jack-in-the-box ready to pop up, dormant habits lie in waiting. Note the weighty impulse seeking to surface as the thought before the thought. Feel how an attention forms around the self-impulse. Whatever the tendency, connect with it first as a breath awareness then intensifying as Wise Reflection to recognize and realize karma's potential. As a Middle Way appreciation, acknowledge the strong urgency of deeper impulses without reacting or indulging them.

Wisely Reflecting, make contact with intrusive and unsettling habits. Pervasive intentions are smothering. The subconscious revealed, experience the complex flashing thoughts as a penetration of Weighty Karma. Settling through a body scan, begin to feel the depths of meditative calm and the gradual shift away from worldly pursuits. The thought before the thought or action, acknowledge the inner monologue. Note the compelling restlessness of these strong habitual impulses.

Breathe deeply 5-7 times through the nose to help steady the mind. Slowly confusion abates. The self actor exposed, note as the attachment and impulsiveness weakens. Slowly feel the shift as an unburdened release from self-obsession. Weighty Karma begins to free up and self-delusion disperses. Self-generated karma is momentarily halted. Acknowledge the ease, relief and release from self-victimization.

Experience the spaciousness of the moment as a cleared, conscious recognition. Note how the impulse and urge to do, become and promote Weighty Karma weakens. Self looks to be busy and involved, but detaching from these impulsive habits calm and insight emerge. Karma has momentarily stopped. Wisely Reflecting, feel the relief and joy to be released from self-promotion.

Realized is life as it truly is—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Acknowledge the unburdening from self-directed conceit to a non-self realization. Wise Reflection along with Wise Action override Weighty Karma's compulsion. The thought before the thought or action, habits are contained and muted. Through a Middle Way appreciation, insight for purposeful action is realized.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath's quality and self-obsessed stream of consciousness; Sustained Contact notes the thought before the thought compulsion; Interest identifies the encroaching Weighty Karma; 'Joy' as a Middle Way appreciation turns towards the appropriate Wise Action; and having One-Pointed Clarity the Weighty Karma is stopped from being expressed.

Wisely Reflecting, purposeful action and non-self insight are experienced and realized.

I've been overrun by dominating habits. It's shocking how careless and reckless I've live. I'm connecting to be aware and know these powerful motives.

May 7—Random Karma*

***“Who oversteps the Norm
Through lust or hate, stupidity or fear,
His good name wanes,
As in the dark fortnight the moon wanes.” DN***

How is it that all at once a long forgotten tune is hummed or a person not thought about in decades comes to mind? These are examples of Random Karma. Confused in one's thinking and absorbed by a self-notion, Random Karma reflects how stray motives pop-up. It is kind of like the weeds that appear after yard cleaning—under the right conditions the karmic habit energies reveal themselves. The Monkey Mind distractions have an impulsive tendency of whatever-the-dice-rolls so is one affected. Compelling habits dominate. The Middle Way appreciation from self extremes is a non-self insight.

Bordering on the irresponsible, Random Karma appears amusing as flashing associations and habits are triggered. People who are impulsive, blurt things out, and who don't plan ahead are dominated by Random Karma. Horoscopes, astrology, buying a lottery ticket, are all putting credence into the 'random' side of life. The artistic imagination is linked to Random Karma, allowing for 'creative juices' to flow. A person can also be over the top with misplaced kindness and affection or be mischievous to the point of annoying.

Always wanting, needing, on the look out for something more appealing, a self-directed restlessness compels Random Karma. Follow Random Karma's unsettling of short, quick breaths. Note the subtle tension and stress at the forehead and around the eyes while the stomach can be jumpy as well as having pressure in the chest area. Thoughts are scattered and impulsive. There is a sense of excitement and amusement as the mind searches. Reflected is an immaturity and how like a puppy, one is carelessly lead astray and chases after everything. Note the exhaustion and restlessness.

Smothered by pervasive intentions, the habitual buildup of Random Karma is also like so many swarming bees, The subconscious revealed, experience the complex flashing thoughts as insight for Random Karma. The self actor is exposed. Slowly feel the shift as a weightless release from self-obsession. Random Karma recedes

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and disperses. Self-illusion breaks-up and fades away. Acknowledge how self-suffering has stopped for the moment.

Through a present awareness, make contact with these intrusive and unsettling habits. One is corrupted by pervasive, self-intentions. The subconscious revealed, experience the complex flashing thoughts as a penetration of Random Karma. Settling through a body scan, begin to feel the depths of meditative calm and the gradual shift away from worldly impulsiveness. The thought before the thought or action, acknowledge the ongoing inner monologue. Note the restless energy compelling one to engage and act on these habitual impulses.

Breathe deeply 5-7 times through the nose to help focus the mind. Confusion slowly abates. The self-illusion exposed, note as self-attachment and impulsiveness weakens. Slowly feel the shift to an unburdened release from self-obsession. Random Karma begins to free up and the self-illusion disperses. Self-generated karma is momentarily halted. Acknowledge the ease, relief and release from self-victimization.

Experience the spaciousness of the moment as a cleared, conscious recognition. Note how the impulse and urge to do, become and promote Random Karma weakens. Self looks to be busy and involved, but detaching from these impulsive habits calm and ease are known. Karma is momentarily stopped. Wisely Reflecting, feel the relief and joy to be released from self-promotion.

Realized is life as it truly is—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Acknowledge the unburdening shift away from the consequences of self-directed conceit to a non-self realization. Wise Reflection along with Wise Action overrides the compulsion for Random Karma. The thought before the thought or action, habits are contained and muted. Through a Middle Way appreciation, insight for purposeful action is realized.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath's quality and self-obsessed stream of consciousness; Sustained Contact notes the thought before the thought compulsion; Interest identifies the encroaching Random Karma; 'Joy' as a Middle Way appreciation turns towards the appropriate Wise Action; and having One-Pointed Clarity Random Karma is stopped from being expressed.

Wisely Reflecting, purposeful action and non-self insight are experienced and realized.

Settled through meditation, I don't give in as an impulsive self actor.

May 8—Proximate Karma*

“There are these disadvantages to drinking...indulging in intoxicants...roaming the streets at unseasonable hours...frequenting festivals...gambling...bad companions...idling.” DN

Similar to Random Karma, Proximate Karma is going with the first impulse. Deadlines, stuck in commuter traffic, multi-tasking at work, juggling family responsibilities, or going to school, all tend to lead to Proximate Karma. Life happens all too quickly as one tries to cope and is on edge. Quick to anger, impatient, neglectful and bewildered, as a self actor greed, anger and confusion dominate. Surging emotions are overwhelming. This reflects an unpredictable and unclear outcome. Worldly pursuits are patterned on self-deception. The mind as a conscious attention seeks to be busy and compelling habits go on to dominate. The Middle Way appreciation from self extremes is a non-self insight.

Overwhelmed by pervasive intentions, discern the complex flashing thoughts to penetrate Proximate Karma. Wisely Reflecting, make contact with these intrusive and unsettling habits. The subconscious revealed, experience the complex flashing thoughts as a penetration of Proximate Karma. Settling through a body scan, begin to feel the depths of meditative calm and the gradual shift away from worldly impulsiveness. The thought before the thought or action, acknowledge the inner monologue. Follow the restless energy compelling one to act.

Breathe deeply 5-7 times through the nose to help steady and concentrate the mind. Confusion slowly abates. The self-illusion exposed, note as attachment and impulsiveness weaken. Slowly feel the shift to an unburdened self-obsessed release. Proximate Karma begins to free up and the self-illusion disperse. Self-generated karma is momentarily halted. Acknowledge the ease, relief and release from self-victimization.

Experience the spaciousness of the moment as a cleared, conscious recognition. Note how the impulse and urge to do, become and promote Proximate Karma weakens. Self looks to be busy and involved, but detaching from these impulsive habits, sense the calm and ease. Karma has momentarily stopped. Wisely Reflecting, feel the relief and joy as release from self-promotion.

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Realized is life as it truly is—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Acknowledge the unburdening from the consequences of self-directed conceit to a non-self recognition realization. Wise Reflection along with Wise Action overrides the compulsion for Proximate Karma. The thought before the thought or action, habits are contained and muted. Through a Middle Way appreciation, insight for purposeful action is realized.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath's quality and self-obsessed stream of conscious; Sustained Contact notes the thought before the thought compulsion; Interest identifies the encroaching Proximate Karma; 'Joy' as a Middle Way appreciation turn towards the appropriate Wise Action; and having One-Pointed Clarity Proximate Karma is stopped from being expressed.

Wisely Reflecting, purposeful action and non-self insight are experienced and realized.

My life passes as though on fast forward and I carelessly react. I wind up paying for all my impulsiveness. I need to be aware and responsible at all times.

May 9—Habitual Karma*

***“Any bad destinations
in this world, in the next,
are rooted in ignorance — all —
accumulations
of desire and greed.***

***“And when a person of evil desires
lacks conscience and respect,
evil comes from that,
and by that he goes
to deprivation.” IT 40***

Stemming from longstanding impulses, an automatic habitual tendency is highlighted. The result is upset and suffering. Boredom, dislike, anger or fear show when uncomfortable or confused. Thinking one is doing the right thing, a self-approach dominates. Disconnected from the present and not understanding life are contributing factors. The mind as a conscious attention seeks to be busy and active as self-inclined habits compel one to act. The Middle Way appreciation from self extremes is a non-self insight experience.

Habitual Karma reveals itself as a nervous twitch or forced smile; stuttering when unnerved or angry; shoulders hunched over when depressed; a rolling of the eyes or wrinkling of the forehead when threatened or in doubt. Habitual Karma quickly leads to compromising responses and actions. An angry person is disliked, a bitter person is rebuffed; a selfish person ends up being needy; a lustful person gives in routinely to desire. Habitual Karma normally is a deciding dynamic in the transferring and continuation of karmic energy.

Wisely Reflecting, make contact with these intrusive and unsettling habits. The subconscious revealed, experience the complex flashing thoughts as a penetration of Habitual Karma. Settling through a body scan, begin to feel the depths of meditative calm and the gradual shift away from worldly impulsiveness. The thought before the thought or action, acknowledge the inner monologue. Note the restless energy compelling one to engage and act on these habitual impulses.

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Breathe deeply 5-7 times through the nose helps steady the mind. Slowly confusion abates. The self-illusion exposed, note as attachment and impulsiveness weaken. Slowly feel the shift to an unburdened release from self-obsession. Habitual Karma begins to free up and self-illusion disperses. Self-generated karma is momentarily halted. Acknowledge the ease, relief and release from self-victimization.

Experience the spaciousness of the moment as a cleared, conscious recognition. Note how the impulse and urge to do, become and promote, Habitual Karma weakens. Self looks to be busy and involved, but detaching from these impulsive habits, calm and ease are experienced. Karma has momentarily stopped. Wisely Reflecting, feel the relief and joy to be released from self-promotion.

Realized is life as it truly is—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Acknowledge the unburdening and the shift away from the consequences of self-directed conceit to a non-self realization. Wise Reflection along with Wise Action overrides the compulsion for Habitual Karma. The thought before the thought or action, habits are contained and muted. Through a Middle Way appreciation, insight for purposeful action is realized.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath's quality and self-obsessed stream of consciousness; Sustained Contact notes the thought before the thought compulsion; Interest identifies the encroaching Habitual Karma; 'Joy' as a Middle Way appreciation turns towards the appropriate Wise Action; and having One-Pointed Clarity stops the Habitual Karma from being expressed.

Wisely Reflecting, purposeful action and non-self insight are experienced and realized.

I can't deny my habits. Too many! But I'm aware and trying to deal with them.

May 10—Destructive Karma*

“Here some man or woman kills living beings and is murderous...because of performing and undertaking such action, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a state of deprivation in an unhappy destination, perdition, even in hell.” MN 135

Irrational phobias, fear, eating disorders, paranoia, upset, serious illnesses and violent episodes are poignant examples of Destructive Karma as you are your own worst enemy. A quick temper is alienating while desire is an exhausting quest for sensual gratification. Trying the materialistic route, results in dissatisfaction. Destructive karma is indulgent, out of control, vicious at times, a detriment and all together harmful. The Middle Way appreciation is a non-self insight.

Overpowering habits and motives are detrimental to one’s self but also harms others. Greed is insatiable. Hatred leads to bitterness and revenge or, worse, harming. Confusion affects as worry and doubt stands out. There is indignation and a desperation to one’s actions. Ill will and harming lead to anger, fear, sickness and a shortened life. Physical deformity and disabilities come from vicious actions. Stealing has the effect of poverty, misery, and having unfulfilled desires and, ironically, being dependent. Sexual misconduct creates mistrust, unstable relationships and being prone to disease. Lying and careless speech leads to abuse, being vilified, distrusted, and potentially having chronic illness. Closer to a monster, acknowledge how Destructive Karma is an upheaval.

Wisely Reflecting, make contact with these intrusive and unsettling habits. The subconscious revealed, experience the complex flashing thoughts as a penetration of Destructive Karma. Settling through a body scan, begin to feel the depths of meditative calm and the gradual shift away from worldly impulsiveness. The thought before the thought or action, acknowledge the inner monologue. Note the restless energy compelling one to engage and act on these habitual impulses.

Breathe deeply 5-7 times through the nose to help steady and concentrate the mind. Slowly confusion abates. The self-illusion exposed, note as attachment and impulsiveness weaken. Feel the shift to an unburdened release from self-obsession. Destructive Karma begins to free up and self-illusion disperses. Self-generated karma is momentarily halted. Acknowledge the ease, relief and release from self-victimization.

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Experience the spaciousness of the moment as a cleared, conscious recognition. Note how the impulse and urge to do, become and promote, Destructive Karma weakens. Self looks to be busy and involved, but detaching from these impulsive habits calm and ease are experienced. Karma has momentarily stopped. Wisely Reflecting, feel the relief and joy to be released from self-promotion.

Realized is life as it truly is—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Acknowledge the unburdening from the consequences of self-directed conceit to a non-self realization. Wise Reflection along with Wise Action overrides the compulsion for Destructive Karma. The thought before the thought or action, habits are contained and muted. Through a Middle Way appreciation, insight for purposeful action is realized.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath's quality and self-obsessed stream of consciousness; Sustained Contact notes the thought before the thought compulsion; Interest identifies the encroaching Destructive Karma; 'Joy' as a Middle Way appreciation turns towards the appropriate Wise Action; and having One-Pointed Clarity stops Destructive Karma from being expressed.

Wisely Reflecting, purposeful action and non-self insight are experienced and realized.

A vicious circle of habits, actions and suffering, I realize how motives charge my life and lead me astray.

May 11—The Transferring of Karmic Energy*

*“Here he’s tormented
he’s tormented hereafter.*

In both worlds

the wrong-doer’s tormented.

*He’s tormented at the thought,
‘I’ve done wrong.’*

*Having gone to a bad destination,
He’s tormented
all the more.” DH 17*

Prompted by motives (the thought before the thought or action), karma is the compelling habit-action leading to thoughts, speech and actions as a self actor. A non-stop mental monologue reveals karma’s voice. You can’t touch or grasp this energy, but nevertheless it is real, identifiable and has repercussions. Dormant, active and transgressing habit potentials thrive as a stream of conscious self-promotion. Carried over are actions giving the illusion of the ‘one’ (the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification) and aren’t a self, soul or individual. Craving for desire, a self-identity, or as an escape, is the go-between link joining the past, present and future. There is a clear trail to how karmic dynamics transfer over.

As a film is a series of spliced together action sequences, look at a scene from a present life experience. A whole life story carries over as a moment-to-moment self-sequel (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention). Flashing thoughts, habits, memories and rapid fire associations, the haunting jabbering inside the head, the urge to act and react, are a stream of conscious karmic thriving energy. With every passing moment is transferred over the whole of self-identified attachments. One is literally will to be and repeatedly gives birth to the self-impressions of greed, hatred and confusion.

Never exactly the same, the self-generated ideal goes on to continually be renewed over many life times and incarnations. While the physical body comes to an end, yet a compelling habitual energy thrives seeking an outlet. So strong is the final death bed thought that the impression carries over to immediately be reborn and reinstated. Not only is the male-female union required, but also the injection of a dying person’s stream of conscious energy to complete the birth process. Depending on the final thought quality, the self-craved identity is born into a difficult

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or pleasant state. Formed as purposeful action, there are detrimental or beneficial results and consequences for everything thought, said and done.

The closest connection to death's final conscious transferring is during sleep. As the body relaxes, mental energy stands out and comes to the forefront. Who hasn't been consumed while trying to sleep with anger, foreboding, sexual fantasies, trips down memory lane, regrets, or wild dreams? While sleeping one sinks into karmic potential. At first dreams seem unintelligible, but looking deeper a guided self-associated greed, hatred, and confusion stands out. Understanding karma's affects, the bigger picture becomes clear: the drive to fulfill sensual desires, the drive to fulfill an existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self. Wisely Reflecting, meditation and awareness intensify to recognize how purposeful action underscores everything.

While dreams are a mix of fantasy and real life, they can help understand how karma has a deeper underlying effect on life. If during the day you saw someone attractive the connection is to have a sexual dream. The karmic connection becomes clear. The same is true with an angry encounter reflected as a nightmare.

Karma can better be understood through analogies and examples rather than intellectual explanations. Think of karma as a blood transfusion. All the biological make up (or in this case habitual karma) is transferred and goes on to thrive in the 'new' body. Or try imagining karma as a kidney or heart transplant. The energy of the 'old' organ continues in the host and affects the operated on body. By passing and spanning the conventional notion of time, karma can also be seen as radio waves which are invisible yet carry a message traversing the normal time continuum.

Karma is most often expressed in terms of a fire. The compelling karmic fire or energy from the deceased joins in the new body of the host to continue burning or thriving, but is never exactly the same and changes. Free will and individual choice are involved. The fire changing as it spreads, the potential possibilities are endless. The outcome, however, blazes around a self-bonfire. Karma reveals the complex direction motivated actions take. Overlapping, convoluted, and transcending the normal straight-line time frame, karma's 'big picture' is complex and intertwined.

Following the breath's quality, acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing habitual energies. You can only be in one place—either carelessly distracted or as a present Wise Reflection; habit dominated or as a non-self realization. The first is a gross misperception leading to suffering and the second is a Middle Way appreciation for suffering's end. Feel how a self-burden is engaged as a thought before the thought or action. Karmic habit energies thrive and play out as impulsive thoughts, speech and actions.

Feel what it is like NOT to be consumed by dominating habits. Note the spaciousness and relief as non-self penetration. Not everything is about self, only delusion and attachments are. Self-willed karma is controlled and abates during meditation. Feel the release and unburdening from self-driven urgencies. Sense how the self-compulsion settles. Note what it is like to put a stop to frantic, self-consuming ways. The thought before the thought or action dialogue falls silent. Nothing moves faster than thought communicated instances. Meditation slows down karmic intentions. Craving works as a catalyst, linking together a past-to-future self-association. Karma like a fire sparks continued reactions that have suffering consequences. The breath's quality is tense, the body flinches while the mind is affected and responds.

Without barring down to think on the complex potentials, follow the shift in breath quality as one settles down. The non-stop mental activity begins to quiet. The habitual buildup slowly disperses. Past actions are stopped from manifesting in the future. Feel how self-directed conceit and restlessness have momentarily diminished. A non-self insight realization is experienced.

There is a long history. My habits didn't just start up all at once. I may not fully appreciate karma, but I sure feel its affects. I can only be present to watch over and deal with my intentions.

May 12—Ringing the Karma Bell*

“Of deeds done and accumulated with deliberate intent I declare there is no wiping out. That wiping out has to come to pass either in this very life or in some other life at its proper occasion.

“Threefold is the fault of guild of bodily action done with deliberate intent, causing pain and resulting in pain. Fourfold is the fault and guild of action through speech, done with deliberate intent, causing pain, resulting in pain. Threefold is the fault and guild of mental action which has these same results.” AN 5, 292

Motives reverberate to be expressed as actions. Every time one unwittingly craves self-associated greed, hatred or confusion sounds off. Following a body scan, note the breath's quality and the Three Poisons affect. Note which habit is echoing and its charge. Greed is a repetitive and excited ringing. Hatred is a loud, vicious clamoring. Confusion is a dull, annoying banging. When the mind settles, self-attachments fall silent.

Feel the habitual buildup of resonating dormant, active and transgressing habit clatter. The internal dialogue is a loud chattering. Greed, hatred and confusion are impulsively acted on. Acknowledge how pressures, influences and charged combinations resonate. The thought before the thought or action, a yapping of needs, fears and anxieties ring inside the head. Feel how self-motivated energy dominates. Note how consciousness is tormented by these many active habits. In turn thoughts, speech and actions lead to upset, conflicts, problems and suffering. Realizing the self actor volume, note how self-clamoring karma dominates life.

Breathe deeply 5-7 times through the nose. Relax one-sided, self-attachments. Allow the obsessive din to settle. Feel how charged motives drop to a faint whisper and then go on to disappear. Recognize the non-self spaciousness or emptiness. Without the Five Groupings of Self-Attached Identification, self-clamor is muted and open to a selfless freedom. .

Goodwill, generosity, honesty, abstinence and sobriety are wholesome tones. When a habitual energy does flare up, follow how the mind narrows around it. Meditation along with a Middle Way appreciation and Wise Reflection together help lower the

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self-volume. Feel the relief from the self-preoccupied cacophony. Again karma is considered dark and light, careless actions or responding wisely.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact identifies the self-chattering dialogue; Interest relaxes the compelling pressure and karmic urgency; 'Joy' arises as a Middle Way appreciation separating from the thought impression; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns self-related actions.

Each habit has its own distinct tone. They sound off, leaving me exhausted as a self actor.

May 13—Karma and the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification*

“Whatever one stays obsessed with, that’s what one is measured by. Whatever one is measured by, that’s how one is classified [body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention].” SN 22, 36

Misperception for a body/mind self-identification distorts life. The sole focus is to fulfill a self-charade (the drive to fulfill desire, the drive to fulfill existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self). In turn one acts out of self-motivated greed, hatred and confusion. This confusion and misunderstanding (also referred to as ignorance or not clearly understanding life and reality), leads to suffering consequences. The thought before the thought or action, motives drive the self actor. On and on karma is generated in order to fulfill a self-delusion. While the Five Groups makeup a human identity, it is important to realize how karma is promoted in relation to the body/mind experience.

The Karmic Body

“If one stays obsessed with form that’s what one is measured by. Whatever one is measured by, that’s how one is classified.” SN 22, 36

Looks, vanity, pampering, nip and tuck plastic surgeries, all revolve around the karma for the body as self. On the basic level, the breath affects the entire physiology in order to fulfill a physical identification.

Settling down after a body scan, allow the jaw to drop slightly stretching the facial muscles. Also relax the chest, abdominal and pelvic areas. Recognize the fine details reflected within the breath. The subconscious revealed, note the mental dialogue plotting out what is beneficial, avoidable and seemingly indispensable. Even sleep and dreams are absorbed in self-promotion.

Generated as an intention or motive for the body, sense how the chattering mind perpetuates a physical identity. Craving after desire, seeks sensual expression. A Hollywood ideal, vanity exceeds basic health requirements. Hair is cut to a certain style or perhaps dyed, tattoos cover the skin, jewelry is worn as adornment, while clothes communicate a certain appeal. Awareness intensifying as Wise Reflection, physical karma is noted. Perpetuated over and over is a habitual urgency seeking out sensual desire and craving as an identification. Acknowledge the search for security, refuge and fulfillment through physical expression. It would seem absurd to

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think or assume that the body wasn't real. After all there are bones, organs and skin fitting nicely together. But the truth is the body is impermanent and reflects the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self. The body is nourished from outside sources then weakens, sickens and dies out.

Here in the Sense Realm, the body dominates as identification. Self-obsessed, a connection is pursued. Note the pressure and activity as a challenging mental dialogue drives one on. Feel the stress as a restricted breathing, drawn facial muscles, tightened throat, chest compressed as well as abdominal and pelvic tension. Physical attachments are literally exhausting and sickening.

Recognize the habitual buildup of karmic potentials. Waves of past to present to future generated actions, self-identification with the body seeks an outlet. Acknowledge the thought before the thought or action as a subconscious urgency drives one towards self-fulfillment. Craving after sense-impressions, a self-identity or seeking to escape, note the subconscious activity connected with the body.

Follow as Wise Reflection intensifies to discern conceit and restlessness. Note how motives as generated karma direct one. Slowly realize how a physical ideal is promoted. Note how these attachments go on to perpetuate and carry over to future manifestations. Without a body, where would self-identification be? Conditions, pressures, influences and elements give the illusion of the 'one' or self.

Awareness Penetration as Insight: Initial Contact follows the breath's quality and physical energies; Sustained Contact notes the habitual stream of habit consciousness for the body and the deeper generated karmic association; Interest notes the self-attachment as a physical ideal; 'Joy' as a Middle Way appreciation disengages from self-associated impulses for the body; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns self-related actions.

As a Middle Way appreciation, acknowledge how self-pursuit leading to suffering has temporarily stopped. Dizzying karmic impulses slow as self-generated pursuits are discerned. Wisely Reflecting, personal insight and understanding emerge. Self-identified actions weaken—the body as a body without self-identification.

I'm attached to a physical ideal, generating actions to fulfill my self-image.

May 14—Karmic Feelings*

“If one stays obsessed with feelings that’s what one is measured by. Whatever one is measured by, that’s how one is classified.” SN 22, 36

Sensory stimulation strikes and brings pressure. All day long eyes, ears, nose, tongue, touch and mental contacts are experienced and are electric-like in their charge. Actions and reactions are provoked. Self-associated sensual gratification and pursuits put one in compromising positions. Sense-contacted pleasures and indulgences give a sense of being alive. Closer to an addiction, sensual pursuit dominates. Sought out are pleasurable contacts, painful situations avoided, and neutral moments are ignored. Acknowledge the humming mental monologue consuming one as a self actor.

Settling down after a body scan, allow the jaw to drop slightly, stretching the facial muscles. Also relax the chest, abdominal and pelvic areas. Recognize the fine details reflected within the breath. The subconscious revealed, note the mind plots out what is beneficial, avoidable and seemingly indispensable.

Settled into the meditation, sense how contacted feelings are less dominant and outstanding. Eyes, ears, nose, tongue, touch and mental impressions are temporarily restrained and subdued. Insight Meditation allows for a break from the sensual go-around. Note the drop off in urgency to act or react. Note how self-identification has momentarily abated.

Recognize the habitual buildup of karmic potentials. Waves of past to present to future generated willed actions, a self-identification for feelings seeks expression. Acknowledge the thought before the thought or action as a subconscious urgency drives one to self-fulfillment. Craving after pleasant feelings, after a self-identity or seeking to escape, note the subconscious activity connected with feelings.

Follow as Wise Reflection intensifies to discern self-conceit and restlessness. Note how motives as karma are generated. Slowly realize how involved feelings are. Note how these attachments go on to perpetuate and carry over to future manifestations. Without feelings, where would self-identification be? Conditions, pressures, influences and elements give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self.

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Awareness Penetration as Insight: Initial Contact follows the breath's quality; Sustained Contact notes the habitual stream of consciousness for feelings and the deeper generated karmic impulses; Interest notes the attachment for feelings; 'Joy' as a Middle Way appreciation disengages from self-associated impulses for feelings; and having One-Pointed Clarity self-related actions are discerned.

As a Middle Way appreciation, acknowledge how self-pursuit leading to suffering has temporarily stopped. Dizzying karmic rounds slow as the self-generated pursuits are discerned. Wisely Reflecting, personal insight and understanding emerge. Self-identified actions weaken—feelings as feelings without self-identification.

I experience life through my senses. In turn I respond and generate actions to keeping a self-image going.

May 15—Karmic Perception*

“If one stays obsessed with perception that’s what one is measured by. Whatever one is measured by, that’s how one is classified.” SN 22, 36

Identifying the world at large, perception through the six senses is recognized. Eyes perceive forms, ears perceive sounds, nose perceives smells, tongue perceives tastes, touch perceives tactile and mind perceives conscious attention and action in general. Yet what is perceived is blurred by a self-bias. The well known example is that of a rope or stick mistaken for a snake. Put eye-witnesses together and they come up with conflicting versions of the event. Perception is limited by self-identification.

Settling down after a body scan, allow the jaw to drop slightly stretching the facial muscles. Also relax the chest, abdominal and pelvic areas. Recognize the fine details reflected within the breath. The subconscious revealed, note the mental dialogue plotting out what is beneficial, avoidable and seemingly indispensable. Even sleep and dreams are absorbed in self-promotion.

Recognize the habitual buildup of karmic potentials. Waves of past to present to future generated actions, a self-identified perception seeks an outlet. Acknowledge the thought before the thought or action as a subconscious urgency drives one towards self-fulfillment. Craving after a self-vision through perception, a self-identity, and seeking to escape, note the subconscious activity connected with perception.

Follow as Wise Reflection intensifies, conceit and restlessness are discerned. Note how motives as karma direct one. Slowly realize how perception is promoted. Follow how attachments go on to perpetuate and carry over to future manifestations. Without perception, where would self-identification be? Conditions, pressures, influences and elements give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self.

Awareness Penetration as Insight: Initial Contact notes the breath’s quality; Sustained Contact follows the habitual stream of consciousness for perception and the deeper generated karmic impulses; Interest realizes the attachment for perception; ‘Joy’ as a Middle Way appreciation disengages from self-associated perceived impulses; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns self-related actions.

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As a Middle Way appreciation, acknowledge how self-pursued suffering has temporarily stopped. Dizzying karmic rounds slow as the self-generated pursuits are discerned. Wisely Reflecting, personal insight and understanding emerge. Self-identified actions weaken—perception as perception without self-identification.

I think I know life, but fall short. I only see what my self-perception allows me to see. In turn I generate actions to sustain a self-image.

May 16—Karmic Mental Reactions*

“If one stays obsessed with mental reactions that’s what one is measured by. Whatever one is measured by, that’s how one is classified.” SN 22, 36

A personal history as autobiography dominates subconscious motivated thoughts. Family, friends, schooling, peer pressure, cultural influences and traditions all go in to forming the likes and dislikes of a self-based personality. Closer to an imprinting, these personal episodes have a limiting affect. An abused child goes on to be a victim or an angry person; a loved child is well-rounded and responsible. Family fighting and divorce make for a troubled youth while a nurturing family relationship likely leads to happiness. The worldly ways or vicissitudes also have an affect as so many pressured demands, distractions and temptations.

Settling down after a body scan, allow the jaw to drop slightly, stretching the facial muscles. Also relax the chest, abdominal and pelvic areas. Recognize the fine details reflected within the breath. The subconscious revealed, note the mental dialogue plotting out what is beneficial, avoidable and seemingly indispensable.

Recognize the habitual buildup of karmic potentials. Waves of past to present to future generated actions, self-identified mental reactions seek an outlet. Acknowledge the thought before the thought or action as a subconscious urgency drives one towards self-fulfillment. Craving after and dominated by self-absorbed mental reactions, a self-identity, or seeking to escape, note the subconscious activity connected with mental reactions.

Follow as Wise Reflection intensifies, conceit and restlessness are discerned. Note how motives as karma direct one. Slowly realize how mental reactions are promoted. Follow how attachments go on to perpetuate and carry over to future manifestations. Without mental reactions, where would your self-identification be? Conditions, pressures, influences and elements give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self.

Awareness Penetration as Insight: Initial Contact follows the breath’s quality; Sustained Contact notes the habitual stream of consciousness for mental reactions and the deeper generated karmic impulses; Interest notes the attachment to mental reactions; ‘Joy’ as a Middle Way appreciation disengages from self-associated mental reactions; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns self-related actions.

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As a Middle Way appreciation, acknowledge how self-pursued suffering has temporarily stopped. Dizzying karmic rounds slow as the self-generated pursuits are discerned. Wisely Reflecting, personal insight and understanding emerge. Self-identified actions weaken—mental reactions as mental reactions without self-identification.

Mental reactions dominate me more than I realize. I'm dominated and made a victim by my many habits. In turn I generate actions to fulfill a self-image.

May 17—Karmic Conscious Attention*

“If one stays obsessed with conscious attention that’s what one is measured by. Whatever one is measured by, that’s how one is classified.” SN 22, 36

Sense stimulated actions make for a conscious recognition of life experienced moments. There is eye, ear, nose, tongue, tactile and mind conscious attention. Without the contact and stimulation there would be no self-identification. Conscious attention is more general than perception, but divisive in how it separates the present moment into self-categories. Caught up in a delusion, everything is viewed as self in origin.

Settling down after a body scan, allow the jaw to drop slightly stretching the facial muscles. Also relax the chest, abdominal and pelvic areas. Recognize the fine details reflected within the breath. The subconscious revealed, note the mental dialogue plotting out what is beneficial, avoidable and seemingly indispensable. Even sleep and dreams are absorbed in self-promotion.

Recognize the habitual buildup of karmic potentials. Waves of past to present to future generated actions, self-identification as conscious attention seeks an outlet. Acknowledge the thought before the thought or action as a subconscious urgency drives one to self-fulfillment. Craving after conscious attention, a self-identity, or seeking to escape, note the subconscious activity connected with conscious attention.

Follow as Wise Reflection intensifies to discern conceit and restlessness. Note how generated motives as karma direct one. Slowly realize how a conscious attention is promoted. Follow how attachments go on to perpetuate and carry over to future manifestations. Without conscious attention, where would your self-identification be? Conditions, pressures, influences and elements give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self.

Awareness Penetration as Insight: Initial Contact follows the breath’s quality; Sustained Contact turns to note the habitual stream of consciousness for Conscious Attention and the deeper generated karmic impulses; Interest notes attachment for conscious actions; ‘Joy’ as a Middle Way appreciation disengages from self-associated impulses for conscious attention; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns self-related actions.

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As a Middle Way appreciation, acknowledge how self-pursued suffering has temporarily stopped. Dizzying karmic rounds slow as the self-generated pursuits are discerned. Wisely Reflecting, personal insight and understanding emerge. Self-identified actions weaken—conscious attention as conscious attention without self-identification.

My consciousness requires greater awareness. I easily fall into a self-serving view of life.

May 18—Immaterial Awareness*

“Mind is chief...” DH 1

Presently you are in the Sense Realm and are affected by sense-contacted impressions and related actions. The Fine-Material Awareness absorptions were a personal appreciation as well as control of life and the mind as a renunciation and restraint for overwhelming sensory involvement. Related to the third conditioned Immaterial Realm of pure psychic energy, the subconscious potential is fathomed and plagued by a self-illusion. As an Immaterial Awareness or purely mental energy recognition, realize what it is to harness karmically related habits and self-promotion.

The Sense, Fine-Material, and Immaterial Realms are all impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. As an Immaterial Awareness experience you come face-to-face with the underlying shadowy illusive conceit and accompanying restlessness that forms as karmic upheaval in your life. Only Nirvana as the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm is free of suffering and self-promoted actions.

Revealed are how motives follow a stream of consciousness affecting experiences and life. This self-compelling urgency is transferred over through craving (for desire, self-identity and as an escape), linking self-charged actions. Under the right conditions, pressures, influences and elements, dormant habits flourish. The settling of karmic habitual potential is experienced through the Immaterial Awareness Absorption as Infinite Space, Infinite Consciousness, Nothingness (or Emptiness) and Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception.

Infinite Space—Non-self insight and the cessation of self-reference aren't some out of touch philosophical wrangling, or intellectual game playing, but liberation is personally experienced through meditation's settling. Life and reality are revealed as they are, connected actions rather than self. Building on the refined Fine-Material Awareness concentration, the subtle body/mind identification is at the center of suffering. Conditions, pressures, influences and elements charge action. Now sitting quietly and removed from all sensory distractions, connect with the Immaterial Awareness mental energy. A concentrated realization emerges not only for how life-actions form, but also for the underlying self-delusion. An astronaut-like traveling through mental space, Infinite Space is discerned.

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Settled and centered, follow the Middle Way appreciation and equanimity removed from self-extremes. At this present moment there is only the meditation, breath quality, and concentrated recognition. Separated from mundane actions, there is only a present distinguished awareness. As an Immaterial Awareness for Infinite Space, pull back from the overt gravity of the self actor to not engage with the mental actions, but simply acknowledge how self-identification forms around a thought impression. Allow the mental activity to pass and move through the Infinite Space within the mind.

Withdrawn from sensory provocation as well as disturbing events (the Fine-Material recognition stands out as equanimity and detachment from sense related actions). Wise Reflecting, follow your intuitive awareness for how craved after impulses emerge from a general self-conceit and restlessness to dominate. Continue with the deepening Immaterial mental experience as awareness for how the mind as pure psychic energy plays out. Settling to move through thought impressions, realize how subconscious habits are activated. Note the flashing of karmic impressions.

Hovering in the space of the Immaterial Absorption, follow how craving instances emerge. Conscious actions are linked through desire, self-identity and as an escape. Here dormant, active and transgressing habit potentials are experienced without acting on them. Allow the experience to fade off into Infinite Space. Recognize how consciousness thrives and is engaged. At the center of conscious awareness, self-identification stands out. While settling the grosser physical identification and sense-contacted impressions, what is left is the pure mental energy of self-conceit around which all other actions revolve and gravitate towards. Note the restlessness that follows as the thought impulse arises, spins and centers as conscious attention. Releasing the craved after attachment, the thought energy passes on and disappears into Infinite Space. Feel how conscious impressions attach to a false sense of conceit and restless.

Through a Middle Way appreciation and equanimity from self extremes, don't indulge or have hostility but allow the thought impression to pass on into Infinite Space. Conscious attention is only a pin-point impression when compared to the vastness of Infinite Space. Wisely Reflecting, discern the non-self insight not associated or burdened by self-directed actions.

Acknowledge how self-identification shrinks and fades into the background of Infinite Space. Wisely Reflecting, insight is more profound than habitual potentials. Without the contributing factors, dormant, active and transgressing habits are temporarily defused. Note how craving has waned. Conceit and the accompanying restlessness drop away. Concentrated and realized, one doesn't take pleasure, find satisfaction, or indulge in Infinite Space as a self-attachment.

Infinite Space Absorption gives way to Infinite Consciousness.

Focusing as self, I am self. Not focusing as self, self recedes. I'm seeing how I fall into a self-centered delusion.

May 19—Infinite Consciousness Awareness*

“With the complete transcending of perceptions of [physical] form, with the disappearance of perceptions of resistance, and not heeding perceptions of diversity, [perceiving, the Infinite Consciousness Awareness]...He reflects on this and discerns, ‘This attainment of Infinite Consciousness is fabricated and intended. Now whatever is fabricated and intended is inconstant and subject to cessation.’ Staying right there, he reaches the ending of the mental fermentations.” MN 52

Mesmerized by an underlying stream of conscious thought impressions, consciousness forms to a mistaken self-singularity. Consciousness then as formed by action and defined by action, self-exaggerated impressions and habits go on to dominate. Attention narrows and collapses around a beguiling self-fantasy. Suffering as stress, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair follows.

With self-delusion at the center like a giant star and the other self-associated habits as planets and moons circling around the self-delusion, a self-orbit is followed. Settled and centered as an Immaterial Awareness, one hovers in the space of pure mind energy. With nothing forming (dormant greed, hatred and confusion) thought impressions pass freely. Follow the wispy action intent without reacting to it. The Immaterial Awareness Absorption expands to Infinite Consciousness.

Wisely Reflecting, through a Middle Way appreciation and equanimity, one moves away from the self-centered gravity and orbit of related Conditions Arising causes and effects.

Feel the release from craving and self-attached potentials. Self-conscious action doesn't form. Suffering isn't experienced. Separating from self-gravity, pin-point conscious mental impressions and intention fade as one passes through an Infinite Consciousness. Though not eradicated, craving is temporarily subdued. Note the cessation. Only when falling back into a self-centered orbit does the experience narrow and collapse again to a self-gravity. Closer to a black hole, self-illusion draws everything around it to be a self-experience. Follow a Middle Way appreciation and equanimity not actively engaged in this compromising self-gravity.

Acknowledge how self-identification shrinks and fades to an Infinite Consciousness as awareness. Note the relief and release from self-gravity. Wisely Reflecting,

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insight is more profound than habit potentials. Without the contributing factors, dormant, active and transgressing habits are temporarily defused. Note how craving has waned. Conceit and the accompanying restlessness drop away. Concentrated and focused, one doesn't take pleasure, find satisfaction, or indulge in Infinite Consciousness as a self-attachment.

Infinite Consciousness gives way to Nothingness or Emptiness.

My consciousness opens and isn't restrained, I don't focus as a self actor.

May 20—Nothingness or Emptiness Awareness*

“With the complete transcending of perceptions of [physical] form, with the disappearance of perceptions of resistance, and not heeding perceptions of diversity, [perceiving, the Nothingness or Emptiness Awareness]...He reflects on this and discerns, ‘This attainment of Nothingness is fabricated and intended. Now whatever is fabricated and intended is inconstant and subject to cessation.’ Staying right there, he reaches the ending of the mental fermentations.” MN 52

Nothingness or emptiness isn't chaos but a realization into the true nature of life and reality without self-involvement or compromising actions. Nothingness is experienced as open, vast, released and without self-definition. Acknowledge the relief to be distanced from a self-burdened orbit. Craving as desire, for a self-identity or to escape don't absorb one. Feel the weightless and relief. In Nothingness there is no self-orbit. Thought impressions twinkle like far off suns hovering in a gravity-less atmosphere of nothingness or emptiness.

For example, you are empty, void and withdrawn from any city or town. There is only a present distinguishing awareness. Continuing further one is empty, void and withdrawn from the world at large and the earth. Opening to Infinite Space and Infinite Consciousness, there is only this present distinguishing awareness. Realize how purposeful action directs consciousness.

The Immaterial Realm is free of dominated Sense Realm impressions. Revealed is how habits as mental actions perpetuate a self runaround. Wisely Reflecting, observe pure conscious energy and the causes and effects seeking expression as dormant habits then to active realization, and on to act out as transgressing habits. Follow as the Immaterial Awareness is greater than the self-inclined habitual gravity.

Acknowledge how self-identification shrinks and fades into a Nothingness Awareness. Wisely Reflecting, insight is more profound than habitual potentials. Without the contributing factors, dormant, active and transgressing habits are temporarily subdued. Note how craving has waned. Conceit and the accompanying restlessness drop away. Concentrated and focused, one doesn't take pleasure, find satisfaction, or indulge in Nothingness as a self-attachment.

Nothingness Absorption gives way to Neither Perception Nor Non-Perception.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

Through 'nothingness' I release my self-ambition to experience an 'emptiness' release.

May 21—Neither Perception nor Non-Perception Awareness*

“With the complete transcending of perceptions of [physical] form, with the disappearance of perceptions of resistance, and not heeding perceptions of diversity, [perceiving, Neither Perception nor Non-Perception Awareness]...He reflects on this and discerns, [‘This attainment of Neither Perception nor Non-Perceptions is fabricated and intended.] Now whatever is fabricated and intended is inconstant and subject to cessation.’ Staying right there, he reaches the ending of the mental fermentations.” MN 52

Self-deception warps life and reality. A limited narrowed experience prevents one from knowing non-self insight and the many actions of the ‘one’ or self and being free from self-suffering

Settled and centered, hovering in the vast space of the Immaterial Absorption, recognize the gravity and orbit of a self-energized sun. Conditions, pressures, influences and elements stand out forming as a self actor. Acknowledge the relief from a self-centered and limiting domination. Feel how craving for desire, self-identity and as an escape aren’t engage.

Wisely Reflecting follow as a Neither Perception nor Non-Perception is experienced without a self-warped focus. Note as the moment doesn’t narrow to a self-consciousness but a Neither Perception nor Non-Perception Immaterial Awareness stands out. An abiding equanimity without self-reference and self-promotion is known. There is no self-promoted fall out bringing one to suffering.

Conscious recognition doesn’t give way to a self-absorbed compelling action as karma. Without self-limitations, a Neither Perception nor Non-Perception Immaterial Awareness is known. The self-inclined attitude is a mistake because only actions make up a self-illusion along with misunderstanding reality. The true nature of life as underscored by purposeful actions, a self-perception doesn’t form.

Acknowledge the peaceful abiding without self forming nor craved after impulses. Self-association shrinks and fades to a Neither Perception nor Non-Perception Absorption. Wisely Reflecting, insight is more profound than habitual potentials. Without the contributing factors, dormant, active and transgressing habits are temporarily subdued. Note how craving has waned. Conceit and the accompanying restlessness drop away. Concentrated and focused, one doesn’t take pleasure, find

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satisfaction, or indulge in a Neither Perception nor Non-Perception as a self-attachment.

Follow how purposeful action relates to the Immaterial Awareness. One-by-one as the conditioned sequences are experienced, Wisely Reflect how the moment arises. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent. So this meditation experience and Immaterial Awareness comes to be, is established, and goes on to fade. Immaterial concentration distinguishes non-self emptiness and cessation of self-reference.

With all self association stopped, my recognition is clear and immaculate. Discerned is what it is to be without self compelling me on.

May 22—Karmic Depths*

***“I have lived well the holy life,
well-developed the path,
seen states of becoming
as devoid of allure,
like poison spit out
after it’s drunk.” THERG 16, 1***

Established and connected as an awareness for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions, now connect to realize the deeper subconscious karmic potentials and repercussions. Below a basic recognition is an ongoing mental monologue of self-conceit and restlessness. Self-compelling habitual urgency drives one on. Settling into the meditation, note how a thought, emotion, memory or impulse flashes. Self-associated greed is tempting, hatred swells up, and confusion as doubt is tormenting. Through Insight Meditation connect with the karmic depths to discern the role of the habitually plagued subconscious.

First, acknowledge the energy of what is being thought and felt (greed, hatred or confusion). Note the distraction both as a physical stress and mental strain. Now Wisely Reflecting, follow the intuitive awareness. Recognize the ongoing karma as the thought before the thought or action. Self-impulses compel thought, speech and actions. Recognize the self-conceit hum and flashing restlessness. Note the urge to act out and fulfill a self-image. Follow how a body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification is clung to. Note the physical identification; feelings as a pleasure are sought after or painfully avoided; a limited self-perception distorts reality; mental reactions are hobbling as careless responses; conscious attention is a misperception for life as self-defined. Karmic impulse carries over from past deluded actions. In turn craving for desire, self-identity or to escape, generates self-promoted actions. The Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle plays out to suffering consequences.

Settling into Insight Meditation, recognize these karmic flashing instances and impressions as impermanent, arising, sticky, stretching in transformation, pulling apart, and fading. Wisely Reflecting, penetrate the underlying karmic provocation and how self-directed motives lead to careless actions. Acknowledge the conversation as the thought before the thought or action takes place in the mind. Follow as Wise Reflection expands as insight to recognize these habitual impulses

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and actions, experiencing how karma drives the self actor. As thoughts quiet down, a distinguishing insight and release from self-promoted reference is known.

The thoughts and images experienced can be challenging and disturbing, but through a Middle Way appreciation one doesn't engage or struggle with the flashing content. Realize how subconscious habit potentials go on to form and give way to action.

At first I feel lost in all the karmic flux. But I allow the impressions to pass without reacting. Self is treacherous and complicated, but I'm becoming familiar with its tendencies and how I'm driven to act out.

May 23—The Craving Link*

“Fettered with the fetter of craving, beings conjoined go wandering and transmigrating on for a long, long time.” IT 15

A movie is an overlapping sequence of spliced together action moments. Seeing only the end one wouldn't understand what had happened without going back to the beginning. The framed instances combine to create past, present and future episodes. Craving for desire, self-identity and to escape, link together habitual actions as a storyline.

Craving emerges out from the subconscious shadows to take center stage as dormant, active and transgressing habits come alive seeking expression and an outlet. Misunderstanding life as self, comfortable sense pleasures are pursued and everything is done to uphold this attachment. But the outcome is dissatisfying—sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. With nothing lasting disappointment is experienced.

A Pandora's Box of self-potentials, an instant before there was a contacted feeling experience and the self actor was a faint whisper. Now follow how self-identification intensifies as a wild uproar and karmic intentions soars out. Under the right conditions, pressures, influences and elements, dormant, active and transgressing habitual potentials appear and are engaged. Craving is the actual moment when habits actively come forward to inspire future acted on suffering consequences.

Acknowledge the body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Reflected are the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self. The Five Groups are a mistaken self-reference. Slowly allow the self-charged habits to disperse. Note how a self-involvement for the Five Groups is craved after. Craving then transfers over the entirety of one's self-charged history.

Wisely Reflecting, feel the shift away from self-pressured motives to non-self insight and the release from the burdensome self-attachment. Through a Middle Way appreciation, distinguish the self extremes for gratification and indulgence as well as hostility and aggression. Don't react or give in to habits. Karma's compelling forward driven urgency is momentarily halted. Habitual impulsiveness relaxes and the moment is discerned. Without self-promoted actions, suffering stops.

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Awareness Focusing as insight: Initial Contact connects with the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact feels how craving emerges and flashes from past habitual instances; Interest notes how attention collapses around craving to carry over as an action potential; 'Joy' as a Middle Way appreciation is followed turning away from craving; and having One-Pointed Clarity recognizes the Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action.

I crave and become. Karma drives me, but now I'm able to identify the dialogue and stop its domination.

May 24—Knowing Your Motives or Intentions*

“For a virtuous person, one whose behavior is virtuous, no volition need be exerted...It is natural that no regret arises in one who is virtuous, one whose behavior is virtuous.” AN 11, 2

So how do you know whether your intentions are genuine? When is karma not karma? Can you be free from your self-obsession to know and have pure thoughts and motives? The answer is, yes. The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path (August/September) is the deliverance from self-promoted actions. But for now responsible conduct and virtue along with the Five Wise Actions direct you from careless and impulsive behavior to be aware and have wholesome actions.

Wisely Reflecting, listen to the ongoing self-monologue. Displeasure over something is because self-expectations weren't met. Sadness is a self-reaction. Joy is a self-fulfilling pleasure. Doubt and worry are a self-suspicion. Judgment is a self-prejudice. Needy, self-fulfillment is sought. In short, there is almost nothing that isn't corrupted by the self actor. Caught in the throes of fabricating a self-defined world and seeking convenient outcomes, you have willed yourself to this present self actor. The Five Groups as Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perceptions, mental reactions and conscious attention) are self-limiting conditions. Craving acts to link habit actions and have far reaching consequences.

Conduct and virtue established through the Five Wise Actions help transform the self actor from close-minded, indulgent and short-tempered to a person having goodwill, who is generous and open-minded. Not an exaggeration, most motives and intentions are self-based (There is, however, the genuine desire to improve and be free from self-domination). Hoping, wishing, dreaming, wanting and needy as well as angry, fearful and bitter, all are self-motivations. Intentions as karmic actions make up life.

Aware of the self-monologue, acknowledge the habitual buildup of compelling motives. Motives reflect greed, hatred and confusion. Sense the pressure and urgency the Three Poisons have as habit impulses. Most times one reacts automatically and is unwittingly taken in. Thoughts, speech and actions are self-defined. Breathe deeply 5-7 times through the nose to help clear away these nagging impulses. Reestablish a present awareness for the body and thoughts. Now Wisely Reflecting, follow the course of wholesome beneficial karma.

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Rightly established in conduct and consummate in virtue, there is no need for an act of will. This would be a self-defined motivation. You are wary of every thought, spoke word and action, realizing the danger and draw backs of careless and detrimental intentions. With conduct and virtue as impeccable, self will or karma doesn't enter into the picture. The natural outcome for being heedful is a person who is free from self-associated remorse and doubts. Without self-conceit and restlessness, joy, concentration, serenity, compassion as well as understanding and insight bring one to a release from self-associated turmoil.

Being virtuous, one has no regrets. Without regrets a selfless and unconditional happiness is experienced. Rapture and fulfillment are known as well as tranquility and detachment from worldly pursuits and entanglements. A deep understanding and insight for life emerges (impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature). Suffering is wisely brought to an end. In this way, wholesome actions lead to a personally discerned recognition.

Follow the shift away from self impulses and the associated relief and release. Self-accumulated habits empty. Note as the mind clears and the self-monologue quiets down. Insight Meditation, Wise Reflection, Wise Action and a Middle Way appreciation direct one to freedom and suffering's end.

I'm happier without self. I crave and then get into trouble. Self only complicates things.

Life Practice

May 25—Self and Your Habitual Obsessions*

The thought before the thought or action, nothing happens without a reason. Life reflects one's motives and intentions. Always chasing after a self-ideal, note the urgency driving the action. The body reveals stressed symptoms: a nervous twitch or forced smile; stuttering when unnerved or angry; shoulders hunched over when depressed; a rolling of the eyes or wrinkling of the forehead when in doubt or challenged, or scratching a cheek side, pull at clothing or play with hair when confused.

Acknowledge craving's affect for sense desired fulfillment, as self-identification or to escape. Realize the self-obsession and the doomed attraction behind one's actions. Ever-mindful, acknowledge the breath's quality, physical stress and mental states. The thought before the thought or action, recognize karma's repercussions.

One way of coming to terms with anxieties and karmic energy is to meditate for 5 to 15 minutes before going to sleep. Quietly sit at the side of the bed. Feel what energies are carrying over from the day. Breathe deeply. Relax the body and clear the mind of any subtle upsets and conflicts. At this late hour thoughts and feelings are disguised as a low-level, whispering chatter. Simply pulling the covers over your head doesn't end the torment, while sleeping pills only blurs the conflict. Feel the disturbing energy to find peace from karma's restlessness. One way or another, the habitual energy seeks to find an outlet and expression. It is better to mindful and compassionately deal with the difficulty or challenge than do something later regretted. What are nightmares? What are sleepless, tossing and turning nights all about? They are karmic upheaval. Make bed time a moment of peace.

The self actor and associated habits are quite a sobering realization. I shouldn't be so hard on myself. I just have to not allow these motives to get the better of me.

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May 26—The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification and Karma*

The mind doesn't settle but is dominated by a self-monologue. Sense the compulsive urgency as the thought before the thought or action. The Monkey Mind (desire, hate, laziness, restlessness, and doubt) reflects a self-obsession. But self has a deeper connection in craving for desire, a self-identity and or as an escape. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification as a self-association are the ultimate charade. The self actor thinks and reacts by way of fulfilling intentions. The body simply expresses and acts on these commands.

Recognize confused struggle and clinging for the Five Groups. The body is made up of external nutrients; feelings are generated through external sense-contacted actions; perception is a muddled misjudging; mental reactions are an emotional and personal make-up from many sources and experiences; conscious attention mistakes life-actions as self connected.

Acting and reacting, one further adds to the stream of conscious storyline. Feel as the self actor struggles. Note the strain of problems, upsets and conflicts. Flashing memories and rapid fire associations, the voice gnawing inside the head, the urge to act and react, the desire, hatred and confusion, all collect as purposeful action leading to suffering.

Through Insight Meditation karmic impulses are slowed down and followed. Connect with the breath's quality. Note how a self-preoccupation consumes and distorts reality. Acknowledge how motives and habits drive one to act and react. Relax the craving after and associated attachments. Feel how self-association begins to fade. Note the shift away from habit domination. Wisely Reflecting, the strain and burden give way to a Middle Way experience and non-self insight.

I breathlessly chase after a self-illusion. I'm obsessed with the body, feelings, perception, mental reactions, and conscious attention. Self is nothing but trouble!

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May 27—Unwise or Wise Action*

With each motive or intention one is guided by unwise-dark karma. Careless motives are greedy, hateful and confusing. Acknowledge Dark Karma's self-promoted affect. You walk yourself out on a gangplank-like of problems and leap into suffering. Impulsiveness in the form of anger, greed, drugs and alcohol as well as lust makes life a waste land.

Feel also how craving is a forward driven compelling action. A past habit comes to mind then joins with craving after as desire, a self-identity or as an escape. Acknowledge how you are catapulted on to act out a future action and brought to suffering. Without any realization or insight, one impulsively and absentmindedly goes on to suffer.

Dark-unwise karmic affects are felt and known immediately but there is also a time lag to karma having far reaching complications. The more profound questions as to why there is poverty, innocent people victimized and senseless tragedies, presently one only sees the final consequences and end results. Actions play out as long histories.

On the other hand awareness, patience, Wise Reflection and the Five Wise Actions connect to beneficial Light Karma associated with renunciation, compassion and goodwill. Mindful, one is generous, caring and responsible. Wise Reflection focuses to a non-self insight and the release from self-reference.

Acknowledge how self-pursuit is restless. Renunciation and restraint help simplify life and reduce worldly associated tensions. Letting down one's guard, you lapse into self-torment. This doesn't mean that you stop caring or sharing but rather aren't consumed by the self-fulfilling side show. Recognized is life and reality as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Only understanding and personal wisdom can see through the self actor to stop detrimental actions from being played out.

Wisely connected and aware, impulsive actions of body, speech and mind aren't manifest. From suffering as a self-obsessed actor to a Middle Way appreciation and non-self insight, habitual domination and craving are released.

It's up to me. Do I want to live carelessly and suffer or wisely not suffer?

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May 28—The Thought Before the Thought or Action*

Settling down through a body scan, acknowledge the restless stream of consciousness. The ongoing monologue of impulsive and habitual greed, hatred and confusion are distracting and bewildering. Strong willed karma or motives compel one on. Acknowledge the mistaken association for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Follow the flow of self-urgency.

Below the level of basic awareness for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions is the conscious hum of self-intentions to think, speak and act. A streaming self-dialogue forms to plot, judge and calculate. These thought impressions are a non-stop self-indulged musing. The thought before the thought or action, beguiling motives make up life-actions. Habits join with craving lead to suffering consequences.

Sense the restless shuffling of memories, desires, fantasies as well as how self-deception challenges and conflicts life. Through the breath's quality, note the underlying stress and pressures. An intensified Wise Reflection, begin to feel the gentle shift away from karmic domination to non-self insight.

Note the habitual buildup. Closer to a suffocation, the breath is labored, wheezing and gasping. Relax the breath, accompanying physical stress and mental tension. A kaleidoscope of whirling self-impressions, greed, hatred and confusion form as craving. Acknowledge the self-deluded burden weighing you down.

Settled, centered and now Wisely Reflecting, impulsiveness stops for the moment. Feel the weightless relief from self as a non-self insight and karmic release. The subconscious revealed, self charged associations carry over to future consequences and suffering. Acknowledge patience, ease, acceptance and release from compelling, habit domination. . Through Insight Meditation and an intuitive Wise Reflection, you are now able to appreciate and understand the fast moving stream of conscious storyline. Life is understood.

The self-vortex slows. Life is regarded as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Through a Middle Way appreciation, purposeful action is realized as careless or wisely directed.

I see how I'm dominated by my habits. Meditation centers me and I have insight for my life.

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May 29—Direct and Clear Awareness for Dark and Light Karma*

Awareness is a presently grounded recognition and connection for thoughts, speech and actions. When the mind is unsettled and wanders, apply Direct Awareness and reestablish mindfulness. Clear Awareness is the recognition for a settled attention and an open-flowing, unobstructed consciousness.

The breath's quality reveals the present state. Note the tense, short breaths when the Monkey Mind distractions dominate and you are unable to settle down. Pressure extends over the body (facial muscles, shoulders arched up, along with abdominal and pelvic strain). Through Direct Attention the mental states as desiring, hateful, lazy, restless or doubting are identified. Pausing to catch one's breath, connect with the unsettling. Feeling how the body/mind communicates and stress is experienced and revealed.

Wisely Reflecting, follow the breath's quality. Without judgment, direct the mind. Sense the Monkey Mind agitation and how the body and attention are impacted. Applying Direct Awareness, slowly feel the shift from habitual confusion to a Middle Way appreciation. Note how the tension and stress arise as well as fade. The habitual accumulation begins to disperse. As mindfulness is reestablished, breathe a deep sigh of relief. Acknowledge how distractions, fantasies and habits are subdued.

As you become better skilled, Awareness Focusing as concentration and insight becomes easier. Initial Contact connects with the present breath qualities; Sustained Contact discerns the distracted moment; Interest identifies the stress and tension; 'Joy' as a present awareness stands out directing the mind; and having One-Pointed Clarity Direct personal insight is established. Self-obsession is disengaged through a Middle Way appreciation.

Clear Awareness recognizes how you are presently settled, calm and focused. Self-impulsiveness has abated. Renunciation and restraint stand out as sense-contacts and sense-impression reactions are disengaged. Equanimity and insight are known.

Awareness Focusing as concentration and insight: Initial Contact connects with the settled breath quality; Sustained Contact distinguishes a calm focus; Interest as Clear Awareness is established; 'Joy' experiences tranquility and relief; and having One-Pointed Clarity is awareness as an undisturbed abiding. Acknowledge the

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absence of impulsive habits and Monkey Mind distractions. At ease and calmly connected, a Middle Way appreciation stands out.

Connected with the present, direct awareness brings me back out from the Monkey Mind fall out and through Clear Awareness I remain calm and focused. I'm now better aware of my life

May 30—Stream of Consciousness*

Life reflects charged action instances. There is careless, self-domination or responsible, insightful action. Karma or motives, the thought before the thought or action, shapes life.

Settled and concentrated, discern how habitual intentions dominate. Acknowledge the physical tension and mental stress, then bursting forth to connect as craving for desire, a self-identity or as an escape.

As an intensified Wise Reflection, follow the stream of conscious thought impressions. Witness the restless karmic compulsion as colored patterns, flashing images and echoing voices. Don't be alarmed or unsettled by these instances. Acknowledge how worldly pressures consume, take one in and are overwhelming—gain/loss fame/dishonor, praise/blame, happiness/pain. In each instance self-expectations and short-comings are met.

Note how the body tenses up while the mind narrows and forms as a self-actor from the ongoing worldly tug-of-war. Recognize the energy, behavior, and distractions. Stressed and disturbed, breathe deeply 5-7 times through the nose to reestablish mindfulness. As a Wise Reflection, recognize the self-drama as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature.

Feel the settling and relief through meditation and the insight experience. Acknowledge the urges, needs, stress and the ongoing karmic conflict. Follow the spaciousness of the open-flowing, attention as the habitual buildup disperses. Self-promotion subdued, a Middle Way appreciation is realized: for non-self, the role of purposeful action, how intentions carry over and play out, craving's role as well as the cessation from self-reference. Feel the detachment and tranquility from the body/mind self-preoccupation. The karmic chattering monologue quiets. Relief and freedom are experienced.

Awareness and understanding are the same for everyone, but are experienced personally as a recognition and clarification for life. Listen, feel and realize what is being thought, said and done. Trying to do or say something differently the next time around. Wisely Reflecting, you go from careless to responsible actions.

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Still doubting karma, think about the following analogy. Picture yourself on a hilltop along side of a boulder or large stone. You go on to push the boulder over the cliff and it crashes down the hillside. This is the equivalent of intentions or motives as purposeful action. The boulder was willed into action. Descending the hillside, the broken and scattered path is the result and consequence of karmic intentions. One is either careless and foolish or responsible and wise.

It takes time, patience, a willingness to investigate, candor, and a consistent recognition to realize and transform karma's connection for greed, hatred and confusion. Generosity, goodwill, and wisdom are engaged.

I involve myself in compromising situations in order to satisfy a self actor. I get exactly what I deserve and end up not liking it. I should know better and now do.

May 31—Undoing Doing*

Karma can be challenge, but focus only on the present and the immediate motives. Note the breath's quality. Identify feelings. Sense how motives keep one restless and disconnected from life and reality. Listen to the ongoing mental dialogue. What is my intention here? What am I trying to do? Can I do something differently? Be aware of karma's domination. Acknowledge how motives flash to preoccupy the mind. Patiently deal with the motives rather than do or say something regretful. Wisely Reflecting, short-comings and carelessness are a learning experience.

If hurried, realize the panic racing through the mind, carrying over as worry and stress. If angry, note how you feel inconvenienced or threatened. If desiring, acknowledge the thrill seeking involved. Familiarize yourself with karma's many signs, symptoms, and expressions. Take full responsibility for your thoughts, speech and actions. Learn from miscues. If you happen to lash out in anger and were never again to commit the compromising act, you would be free from karma's domination. Habits can be corrected and absolved through Wise Action. Goodwill heals hatred; generosity opens to caring; honesty stops disingenuous intentions; abstinence leads to compassion rather than passion; sobriety makes for a clear mind. A turn around doesn't come overnight, but you are much further along than when you began Insight Meditation. Wisely Reflecting, insight for self-promoted actions is known.

Understanding is personal recognition—aware and Wise Reflection counter self-deception. Each person struggles with his/her own weaknesses, problems and challenging behavior. Wise Reflection is having a personal intuition for life. Realize what is happening and what needs to be done in order to help yourself. Not only stopping detrimental actions, penetrated is the true nature of reality without any self-domination.

Take a break from being yourself. Breathe deeply as a composed present recognition. Stop engaging in careless and impulsive behavior. Karma is a heavy burden of conjured self-expectations, obligations, social pressures and personal associations. Obsessed with a body/mind self-identity, feel how one is driven to defend and fulfill a self-image. Acknowledge how self-pursuit is compromising. The Middle Way appreciation detaches from self indulgence and aggression to a practical and insightful recognition of life.

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Self is action related and I'm the instigator. After indulging myself, what do I have to show for it? Come on already, let go!



JUNE— Conditions Arising, the Becoming of Everything



If you think self is quite a knot to untie, then what about a three-headed self actor rearing its head—past, present and future. One is enough! You'll pass on the other two characters. By now you are probably shaking or scratching your head and wondering.

Also known as Dependent Arising or Dependent Origination, Conditions Arising is used here. The plural 'conditions' expresses the connection of the many conditions, pressures, influences and elements joining to give the illusion of the 'one' or self. Arising is reference to the complex connection of purposeful action underscoring all life. Conditions Arising as a dynamic cycle affects both physical and psychological events through multiple causes and effects. Revealed is how misunderstanding life has brought you to suffering. The Sense, Fine-Material and Immaterial Realms are all subject to and defined by Conditions Arising. Within Conditions Arising there are two levels: the Everyday Arising as a basic intuition for one's motivated actions or karma, and the Greater Arising as a wisdom realization ending self-promoted actions.

Not to be dismissed or taken for granted because of its straight forward pattern, Conditions Arising reflects how past self-associated motives impacts present life and goes on to transfer and perpetuate future consequences. More than a theory, philosophy or intellectual pondering, but rather a true-life experience of 'actual reality,' Conditions Arising reveals how self-suffering is engaged and followed, but also is a liberation. Through a Middle Way appreciation, dominating habit impulses are stopped.

Though close in its understanding, modern science is more a numbers game calculation, missing the deeper role of purposeful action as well as the intimate connection of conditioned causes and effects (the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self). It is important to realize there is no beginning first moment. This would imply an individual source or start with a one of a kind exact cause leading to a one of a kind effect or outcome (although a general misunderstanding of life undermines all actions). Life has dimensions, complications, energy and degrees of potential underscored by compelling-willed actions. Impermanent, nothing stays the same but changes as purposeful action. The Conditions Arising, twelve-linked cycle follows the self-deception of reality for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention). Through the intimate experience of Insight Meditation, awareness as Wise Reflection penetrates Conditions Arising to deal with suffering.

While Conditions Arising is here conveniently divided into past, present and future stages, however, the cycle dominates and persists as a whole at every instance of every moment.

Conditions Arising Past— Misunderstanding and Motives or Karma

Affected and charged by misunderstanding (not knowing or ignorance of the Four Noble Truths detailed in July), life is misunderstood; the impermanent as permanent, the dissatisfying and unsettling to be satisfying, and what is non-self to be self.

“And what is ignorance? Not knowing suffering, not knowing the origination of suffering, not knowing the cessation of suffering, not knowing the way of practice leading to the cessation of suffering: This is called ignorance.”

This general misunderstanding for self and not realizing the non-self nature of reality conditions and mistakenly leads to thought-formations or motives (a false self-awareness and related habits) arising. A self-association dominates as confusion.

“And what are fabrications [self-directed motives]? Through mental fabrications, verbal fabrications and physical acted fabrications.”

Conditions Arising Present— Present Consciousness, Body/Mind Identification, Sense Contacts, Sense Impressions, Feelings, Craving, Attachment, and Commitment

Mental fabrications conditions and leads to a Present Consciousness arising.

“And what is consciousness? These six are classes of consciousness: eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, intellect-consciousness. This is called consciousness.”

Present Consciousness conditions and leads to a body/mind self-identification arising.

“And what is name-and-form [the body/mind association]? Feeling, perception, intention, contact, and attention: This is called name. The four great elements, and the form dependent on the four great elements: This is called form [the body or material form]. This name and this form are called name-and-form [the mind/body association as mistaken to be self].”

The body/mind self-identification conditions and leads to Sense Contacts (sense based organs) arising.

“And what are the six sense bases [organs as contacts]? These six are sense base: the eye-base, the ear-base, the nose-base, the tongue-base, the body-base, the intellect-base. These are called the six sense [contacts/organs] base.”

Sense Contacts conditions and leads to Sense Impressions (sense stimulated experiences) arising.

“And what is contact [of the sense impressions]? These six are classes of contact: eye-contact, ear-contact, nose-contact, tongue-contact, body-contact, intellect-contact. This is called contact.”

Sense Impressions conditions and leads to Feelings arising.

“And what is feeling [pleasant, painful or neutral]? These six are classes of feeling: feeling born from eye-contact, ...ear-contact, ...nose-contact, ...tongue-contact, ...body-contact, ...intellect-contact. This is called feeling.”

Feelings conditions and leads to Craving arising.

“And what is craving? These six are classes of craving: craving for forms, craving for sounds, craving for smells, craving for tastes, craving for tactile sensations, craving for ideas. This is called craving.”

Craving conditions and leads to Attachment (clinging) arising.

“And what is clinging [attachment]? These four are clingings: sensuality..., views..., precepts and practice..., and doctrine of self This is called clinging.”

Attachment conditions and leads to Commitment (becoming) arising.

“And what is becoming [commitment]? These three are becomings [commitment]: sensual (self-fulfilling desires), form [body as self] becoming, and formless [mental or psychological] becoming. This is called becoming.”

Conditions Arising Future— Life-Actions, Problems and Suffering

Commitment conditions and leads to life-actions (birth) arising

“And what is birth [life-actions]? Whatever birth, taking birth, descent, coming-to-be, coming-forth, appearance of aggregates [body/mind], and acquisition of [sense] media of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called birth.”

Life-Actions conditions and leads to problems and suffering (sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair) arising.

“Now what is aging and death [problems and suffering]? Whatever...weakening of the faculties of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called aging. Whatever deceasing, passing away, breaking up, disappearance, dying, death, completion of time, break up of the aggregates, casting off of the body, interruption in the life faculty of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called death.

“Such is the origination of this entire mass of stress and suffering.” SN 12, 2.

From self-promoted actions, Conditions Arising as a causes and effects purposeful action cycle dominates life and reveals how one comes to suffer.

June 1—The Role of Conditions Arising*

“Deep is this [Conditions Arising realization] and deep its appearance. It is because of not understanding and not penetrating this...that this generation is like a knotted ball of string...not going beyond rebirth, beyond the planes of deprivation, woe, and bad destinations.” DN 15

Conditions Arising causes and effects is summed up as a simple wisdom: “This being that exists; through the arising of this that arises. This not being, that does not exist; through the ceasing of this that ceases,” MN 79 and “When this exists, that comes to be; with the arising of this, that arises. When this does not exist, that does not come to be; with the cessation of this, that ceases” SN 12, 62, 2. Don’t dismiss, trivialize or be misled by the straightforward reference. As a structural principal, phenomena is underscored by purposeful action, Conditions Arising is profound and far reaching. Within Conditions Arising there are two levels—Everyday Arising and Greater Arising.

Everyday Arising— Compelling, self-motivated actions

The everyday experience of Conditions Arising relates to how motives affect actions to be plagued by problems, then to suffer. Conditions Arising is very much alive as a twelve-linked action sequence. Life is only seen from a limited self-perspective. Actions move by so fast that one can’t keep up with Conditions Arising, but through Insight Meditation and Wise Reflection the action sequences can be followed.

Careless, distracted and dominated by habits, the present is overlooked and taken for granted. Worldly pressures and temptations along with a Monkey Mind inattention and the Three Poisons (greed, hatred and confusion) are handicapping. Everything is done in order to fulfill a self-obsession. Through a body/mind identification, one craves after sensory experiences, for a self-identity, or seek escape.

Realizing Conditions Arising, reflect on how habits compel one to think, speak and carelessly act. Everything is done in an attempt to justify a self-obsession. A situation is conveniently identified as self-related. No matter how innocent or trivial, self-centered actions have repercussions and are dominated by the Conditions Arising cycle. Even seeking a good time is a suffering when the moment doesn’t

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turn out the way wanted. Aware, patient and responsible, follow Wise Action. Life becomes manageable and less problematic.

Throughout these many months of dedicated meditation Wise Reflection has matured as insight. Moving from self-distracted to a Middle Way appreciation, a personal intuition for what life is about is realized. The Everyday Arising recognition is a Wise Reflection for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions.

Settled and centered, listen to the ongoing prattling inner monologue. Subconscious motives as intention are revealed. A causes and effects habitual pattern follows. Slowly direct the mind to acknowledge the self-compulsion. Be patient. Behind all the consequences and unfolding drama is purposeful action. Through Insight Meditation experience how self-promoted actions arise. Note the movie frame-like instances as one action moment splices and morphs with the next action moment. Desiring as well as seeking existence, craving as delight and pleasure joins in the present with past actions to then manifest as future consequences. The Conditions Arising cycle revolves around the body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification.

Feel the compelling urgency of deep-seated habits. At every instance, encounter and experience a self-related action is generated and leads to suffering consequences. Acknowledge the stickiness and burden for self and the unsettling of self-identification. Feel how a habitual buildup charges the body/mind attachment. No matter how innocent, self-promoted actions have consequences and are dissatisfying and problematic. Known is how Everyday Conditions Arising plays out and keeps one in the suffering loop.

Awareness Penetration as concentration: Initial Contact acknowledges the present physical and mental states; Sustained Contact recognizes the stress and affect of subconscious motives; Interest begins to relax and release the affecting mental energy; 'Joy' as a Wise Reflection turns away from the self-related burden; and having One-Pointed Clarity as insight for self-motivated actions is realized.

The Greater Arising—

Causes and effects compelling a self actor

Unable to see beyond self-directed actions, an out-of-control self-delusion follows from one life to the next. Not understanding life and reality, the Greater Arising is the result from specifically not knowing the Four Noble Truths (detailed in July) which reveals suffering's origin as self-related but also the Middle Way deliverance to ending suffering. In brief, the Four Noble Truths are:

1. Impermanence and dissatisfaction are a part of life. Having no unique or individual character, mistaking the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification brings one to suffering.

2. Played out through the Conditions Arising cycle, craving as delight and pleasure links past and present actions to future suffering consequences.
3. Craving brought to cessation, suffering ends.
4. The way to realizing craving's cessation and suffering's end is the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path guidance and experience.

The Greater Arising recognition follows a purposeful driven action cycle. 'A' with its action series of conditions, pressures, influences and elements interacting leads to 'B' with its action series interacting and so on. Weeds, for example, come about from rain, sun, earth, grass elements and thrive in the right season. Take away any one condition and the weeds cease to be. There is no 'single' cause but the action energies of the many give the illusion of the 'one' or self. With no creator God or single starting point, this is how life plays out as non-self causes and effects generated forces. Undeniable and without exception, all history, events, moments and lives as well as the universe at large follow the Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action cycle.

Settle and centered, note how presently the senses are restrained and for the most part inactive. Without any overt contacted stimulation, acknowledge the non-self action qualities of conditions compelling the self actor. Patient and Wisely Reflecting, self-driven impulsiveness for a body/mind identification stand out. Without the corresponding conditions, pressures, influences and elements, the self-deception is momentarily subdued and dormant. Eyes as sight, ears as hearing, nose as smelling, tongue as taste, skin as tactile, and mind as thoughts are all conditioned experiences made-up of interconnected actions. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention) are Conditions Arising experiences.

From a self-misunderstanding, self-promoted actions are engaged. Wisely Reflecting, acknowledge life and reality without self-reference or self-promotion. Highlighted by craving as delight and pleasure, motives are compelling. Through a Middle Way appreciation detached from self extremes, realize the non-self qualities within Conditions Arising. Take away any one condition and the self-experience ceases. Understanding and penetrating Conditions Arising directs one to ending suffering. The Greater Arising discerned, a self-foolly is revealed. As a purposeful action, the self actor arises by mistaking life as self-defined. Slowly release the self-burdened obsession.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact connects with the present breath quality and mental states; Sustained Contact notes the many ongoing pressures affecting the body, feelings, mind and life-actions; Interest acknowledges the causes and affects patterns forming a self actor; 'Joy' turns away from a self-illusion to a Middle Way appreciation not dominated by self extremes; and having

One-Pointed Clarity discerns the purposeful action that is Conditions Arising causes and effects.

My self-pursuit involves me in a complicated runaround. In the end I only have suffering to show for it.

June 2—Misunderstanding Life and Reality, Everyday Arising*

Conditions Arising Past— Misunderstanding and Motives

“Ignorance [misunderstanding] is impermanent, conditioned, dependently arising, subject to destruction, vanishing, fading away and cessation. This is called dependently arisen phenomena.” SN 12, 20 (10)

Through these conditions arising, these actions then come to be—through the conditions of misunderstanding life and reality a mistaken self-awareness arises.

As short-lived surging actions, impermanence dominates. You aren't aware or clearly understanding. Caught up trying to cope with day-to-day demands, careless and impulsive habits automatically spring. Like a radio not precisely tuned in, a garbled connection with life is experienced. Obsessed as a self actor, the self extremes for indulgence and gratification as well as hostility and aggression are reflected. Wisely Reflecting, life is known as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Conditions Arising as a purposeful action underscores all life and reality.

From the very start, no sooner do you awaken to get out of bed and feet touch the floor, plotting and scheming as a self actor takes charge. A nerve racking and exhausting runaround, suffering from headaches, stomach problems, high blood pressure and elevated cholesterol as well as mental confusion, insecurity and doubts are manifested. Most of these ailments and maladies are self-inflicted. Off to a bad start, one falls victim to the Conditions Arising suffering cycle. Every impulse revolves around the notion to fulfill a self-charade. Wrongly identified and plagued by self-conviction, the Conditions Arising first link misunderstands life as permanent, satisfying, and self.

Feel how misunderstanding leads to self-associated demands and expectations. Even when quiet there is an underlying disturbing restlessness. A habitual monologue actively plots out scenarios. Sense how the breath constricts and a self-perception is suffocating. Follow how tension manifests itself in the body (facial muscles, shoulders and back, chest pressure, as well as abdominal and pelvic strain). Acknowledge the corresponding affecting mental states. Gently release the

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habitual buildup. A burdensome, self-illusion dominates. Feel the gravity and urgency leading to compromising situations. The Catch-22 is that upholding a self-ideal is painful and suffering. Note the causes and effects patterns for misunderstanding a body/mind identification as self.

Settled and centered through as an awareness for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions, now direct your attention as a Wise Reflection. Recognize the breath's quality as rough along with an accompanying general physical stress. Acknowledge the stressed feelings (seeking to fulfill pleasant moments, avoiding pain, and neglecting neutral experiences). Note how the mind is unsettled by self-conceit and made restless. Day-to-day experiences add to the ongoing challenges, frustration, friction and upset. Recognize how corresponding habits dominate. Acknowledge the compulsion to think, speak and act out as a self actor.

Sitting centered and focused, discern how habitual intentions and a self-notion get the better of one. Life is seen and experienced as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Wisely Reflecting, note the Conditions Arising causes and effects. In this tranquil moment, self-bias is subdued as the senses are settled and unaffected. Conditions Arising reflects the many actions in the 'one' or self. Calm and patient, discern how purposeful action shapes life. Not to be identified, delighted in or pursued as a past, present or future self-association, one isn't measured or defined by a body/mind association. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are a mistaken self-reference. Acknowledge how self-charged motives wane and the habitual buildup slowly disperses.

Subconscious actions exposed, self-compromising intentions are unsettling. Motives persist on three levels as dormant habits come out under the right conditions; active is when a habit presently flares up in the mind, and transgressing is when careless actions are performed.

Note how misunderstanding affects the self actor. Carried over and renewed with every experience and encounter is a long habitual history. Mistaking life as self, the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle moves forward.

Following a Middle Way appreciation away from self extremes, habits aren't indulged. Acknowledge how the breath quality relaxes and the mind focuses to a Wise Reflection. A brief intervention from the Conditions Arising cycle is experienced. Without self-promoted actions escalating, suffering abates.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact connects with the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact feels the distraction and confusion surrounding self; Interest notes the underlying misunderstanding for life as self; 'Joy'

turns away from a self-inclined illusion to a Middle Way appreciation not dominated by self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns the purposeful action of Conditions Arising.

I'm starting to see the big picture and how my self-antics affect me. All day long habits and a self-centered view get the better of me—I, me, mine! Meditating, I see how I become a self-actor.

June 3—Motives, the Everyday Arising*

“Motives are impermanent, conditioned, dependently arising, subject to destruction, vanishing, fading away and cessation. This is called dependently arisen phenomena.” SN 12, 20 (10)

Through these conditions arising, these actions then come to be—through the conditions of misunderstanding life and reality, motives as a mistaken self-identity arise.

Misunderstanding life, a one-sided self-fixation forms as a subconscious conceit and restlessness. Self-defined motives go on to charge life and are expressed through careless thoughts, speech and actions. Each person has his or her more challenging habit characteristics of greed, hatred or confusion. The past influencing the present turning to future actions, one reacts impulsively. Acknowledge the buildup of self-associated stress. Images flash and an internal self-driven dialogue compels one on. Note the causes and effects pattern as misunderstanding brings about motives related to a self-delusion.

Settled and centered, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Follow the Middle Way appreciation away from self extremes. Note the breath's quality. Acknowledge the endless chattering inside the mind. Misunderstanding life, self-associated thoughts form. Literally a physical suffocation and mentally compromised, the self actor is overwhelming. Acknowledge the mental dialogue of do's and don'ts as self-conceit and restlessness dominate. Plotted and played out to uphold and justify a self-infatuation, acknowledge motivation's charged affects. Mistaken and confused, self-promoted actions are followed. All day long self role playing is engaged—I want this...I don't...I should...I'll try...I hate...I don't want to. Subconscious habits exposed, self-compromised intentions are unsettling. Motives persist on three levels—dormant habits come out under the right conditions; active is when a habit presently flares up; and transgressing when careless actions are performed. Feel the urgency of compelling motives as purposeful actions shape life. Acknowledge the compulsion to think, speak and act out as a self actor.

Note how self-obsessed motives affect one as a self actor. Carried over and renewed with every experience and encounter is a long habitual history. Mistaking life as self, the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle moves forward.

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Following a Middle Way appreciation away from self extremes, habits aren't indulged. Acknowledge how the breath relaxes and the attention focuses to a Wise Reflection. A brief intervention from the Conditions Arising cycle is experienced. Without self-promoted actions escalating, suffering abates.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact connects with the present breath quality and mental states; Sustained Contact follows how self-intentions form; Interest notes how habits are compromising; 'Joy' turns away from self-interest to a Middle Way appreciation not dominated by self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns the purposeful action of Conditions Arising.

I realize how misunderstanding affects me. I'm careless and habits then spring up to dominate me. I connect with my motives through Wise Reflection.

June 4—Present Consciousness, the Everyday Arising*

Conditions Arising Present—

Present consciousness, body/mind identification, sense contacts, sense impressions, feelings, craving, attachment, and commitment

“Consciousness [present consciousness] is impermanent, conditioned, dependently arising, subject to destruction, vanishing, fading away and cessation. This is called dependently arisen phenomena.” SN 12, 20 (10)

Through these conditions arising, these actions then come to be— through the conditions of motives, a present consciousness as a mistaken self-identity arises.

Tormented and dominated by impulsive habits, a present consciousness is a self-pursuit to gratify and indulge sensual desire, at odds and quarrel through hatred and indignation, and plagued by doubts and worry as confusion. You will yourself as a self actor. Not fated or destined, one mistakenly and carelessly sides with self. Present consciousness is a self-obsession. Note the causes and effects pattern as misunderstanding along with motives joins to bring about a Present Consciousness recognition.

Settled and centered, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Follow as motives form and accompanying thoughts surface. Misunderstanding, a self-illusion forms around a body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention. However, the self-image is in contrast to reality's true nature as one scrambles to update and modify the self-illusion.

Note how an ongoing mental dialogue impacts the present consciousness. Sense how one reaches out for and clings to a self-ideal. Feel the pressures, stress and burden that self impose on one. Follow how self-conceit and an accompanying restlessness spawn a flurry of unsettling habit reactions. Apprehension and mistrust dominate. The breath's quality is constricted while the mind narrows as a self-obsession. Acknowledge the compulsion to think, speak and act out as a self actor. Settled and centered, discerned is how habits dominate. Observed is life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Conditions Arising causes and effects as a purposeful action underscores all life and reality.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

Note how a self-obsession as a Present Consciousness affects one. Carried over and renewed with every experience and encounter is a long habitual history. Mistaking life as self, the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle moves forward.

Following a Middle Way appreciation away from self extremes, habits aren't indulged. Acknowledge how the breath relaxes and the mind focuses to a Wise Reflection. A brief intervention from the Conditions Arising cycle is experienced. Without self-promoted actions escalating, suffering abates.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact connects with the present breath quality and mental states; Sustained Contact follows as self-consciousness forms; Interest notes the self-directed intentions; 'Joy' turns away from self-involvement to a Middle Way appreciation not dominated by self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns the purposeful action of Conditions Arising.

Self is all I've known. My habits spring up from misunderstanding life as self. The Middle Way directs me away from my one-sided views to know life as it is—without self.

June 5—Body/Mind Identification, the Everyday Arising*

“Name and form [body/mind identification] is impermanent, conditioned, dependently arising, subject to destruction, vanishing, fading away and cessation. This is called dependently arisen phenomena.” SN 12, 20 (10)

Through these conditions arising, these actions then come to be— through the conditions of a present consciousness, a body/mind association as a mistaken self-identity arises.

While motivated intentions are the dominant of the two, the body goes on to act out the habitual instructions. Like riding a bike, the mind works in unison with the body. The body/mind association makes up the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification that form self-illusion. Together body and mind are a self-misadventure. Note the cause and effects pattern as a present consciousness attaches to a body/mind identification.

Settled and centered, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Follow how the body/mind interact and communicate. With every thought or emotion, the body feels the affects of self-stress and motivated burden. Acknowledge how the causes and effects of misunderstanding life and pursuing a self-identity contribute to a body/mind illusion. Recognize the many actions giving the illusion of the ‘one’ or self. Together material form and the accompanying conscious abilities (feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention) make up a self-illusion. Never achieving control and happiness, one suffers. Acknowledge self-conceit’s affects. Note how subconscious flashing thought impressions go on to express self-intentions through the body. Wisely Reflecting, slowly begin to release the habitual association.

Discern how habits dominate as a self actor. Observed is life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Conditions Arising causes and effects as a purposeful action underscores all life and reality.

Note how a self-obsession as a body/mind affects one. Carried over and renewed with every experience and encounter is a long habitual history. Mistaking life as self, the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle moves forward.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

Following a Middle Way appreciation away from self extremes, habits aren't indulged. Acknowledge how the breath relaxes and the mind focuses to a Wise Reflection. A brief intervention from the Conditions Arising cycle is experienced. Without self-promoted actions escalating, suffering abates.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact connects with the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact follows the energy of the body/mind identification; Interest notes the preoccupation with the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification; 'Joy' turns away from self-identification to a Middle Way appreciation not dominated by self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns the purposeful action of Conditions Arising.

I realize how the mind affects the body and the body recoils. I literally torture and make a suffering of my life.

June 6—Sense Contacts, the Everyday Arising*

“Sense Contacts are impermanent, conditioned, dependently arising, subject to destruction, vanishing, fading away and cessation. This is called dependently arisen phenomena.” SN 12, 20 (10)

Through these conditions arising, these actions then come to be—through the conditions of a body/mind identification, sense contacts as a mistaken self-identity arises.

Overwhelmed by sensory action, the senses are stimulated by contacted energies—light and forms affect the eyes; vibrations and sounds affect the ears; smells and odors affect the nose; flavors affect the tongue; tactile sensations affect the skin; life-action in general affects the conscious mind. Neglectful and impulsive, mistaken are the senses and sensory action as a self experience. Follow how the mind goes on to narrow, judge, define and react as self. Centered through Insight Meditation, note how the senses are calm and not directly affected while the attention is undisturbed. The mind follows to quiet down. Note the causes and effects patterns as a body/mind identification joins with sense contacts.

Settled and centered, Wise Reflection on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Recognize how the senses of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin and mind go on to be stimulated through daily activities and engagements. From the conditions of a body/mind identification the senses go on to be engaged and a mistaken self-involvement follows. Acknowledge how actions strike and stimulate the senses. Note how the body/mind identification intensifies. One doesn't feel alive unless engaged. This is how the Sense Realm is experienced. Following a Middle Way appreciation, slowly allow self-identification for sensory actions to relax. Feel as the dominating interaction weakens and releases.

Discern how habits get the better of one as a self actor. Observed is life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Conditions Arising causes and effects as a purposeful action underscores all life and reality.

Note how the self-obsession for senses contacts affects one. Carried over and renewed with every experience and encounter is a long habitual history. Mistaking life as self, the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle moves forward.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

Following a Middle Way appreciation away from self extremes, habits aren't indulged. Acknowledge how the breath's quality relaxes and the mind refines as a Wise Reflection. A brief intervention from the Conditions Arising cycle is experienced. Without self-promoted actions escalating, suffering abates.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact connects with the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact follows sense activity; Interest acknowledges attachment for sensory involvement; 'Joy' turns away from the senses to a Middle Way appreciation not dominated by self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns the purposeful action of Conditions Arising.

Never truly at ease, I'm always looking forward to my next sense-contacted experience. I settle down now to separate from my self-attachment.

June 7—Senses Impressions, the Everyday Arising*

“Sense Contact [sense impressions] is impermanent, conditioned, dependently arising, subject to destruction, vanishing, fading away and cessation. This is called dependently arisen phenomena.” SN 12, 20 (10)

Through these conditions arising, these actions then come to be—through the conditions of sense contacts, sense impressions as a mistaken self-identity arise.

The senses come alive and are dizzying in their electric-like charge—eyes are affected by light and forms; ears are struck by sound vibrations; the nose is stimulated by passing scents; the tongue absorbs tastes; skin reacts to tactile sensations; and the mind cognizes and is conscious of action in general. The senses are actually independent of each other. Eyes see, ears hear, nose smells, tongue tastes, skin touches, and mind as conscious action. Note the causes and effects pattern as sense contacts join and engage as sense impressions.

Look, there’s someone I know—sight. A voice is heard calling out—sound. A peculiar scent passes by—smell. A flavor is appealing—taste. Cold is felt—tactile. A thought or recognition—the mind cognizes. Unfortunately the moment is mistaken as a personal experience. Neglected are the surroundings, how the many actions join to give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self.

Settled and centered, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Follow how sense impressions are subdued. Noted are how sense impressions come to be through the interaction of multiple conditions, influences, pressures, and actions. A time out as restraint from sensory involvement, recognize how habitual intentions aren’t engaged. Patience and equanimity as relief from ongoing the sensual deluge emerges.

Discern how habits dominate one as a self actor. Observed is life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Conditions Arising causes and effects as a purposeful action underscores all life and reality.

Note how sense impressions affect one. Carried over and renewed with every experience and encounter is a long habitual history. Mistaking life as self, the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle moves forward.

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Following a Middle Way appreciation away from self extremes, habits aren't indulged. Acknowledge how the breath's quality relaxes and the mind refines as a Wise Reflection. A brief intervention from the Conditions Arising cycle is experienced. Without self-promoted actions escalating, suffering abates.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial contact connects with the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact notes how sense impressions are affected; Interest acknowledges the reaction to pleasant, painful and neutral impressions; 'Joy' turns away from sense impressions to a Middle Way appreciation not dominated by self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns the purposeful action of Conditions Arising causes and effects.

I'm easily taken in by sense impressions. I want to enjoy myself or look for something more gratifying. I'm on edge and never truly at ease.

June 8—Feelings, the Everyday Arising*

“Feeling is impermanent, conditioned, dependently arising, subject to destruction, vanishing, fading away and cessation. This is called dependently arisen phenomena.” SN 12, 20 (10)

Through these conditions arising, these actions then come to be— through the conditions of sense impressions, feelings as a mistaken self-identity arise.

Sense impressions give way to feelings being experienced as pleasant, painful or neutral. There is no moment that doesn't have a corresponding degree of feeling. As a self actor, pleasant feelings are sought out, painful feelings are avoided, and neutral moments are neglected. Note the causes and effects pattern as sense impressions spark feelings.

A present interaction, sense impressions are filtered through a self-conscious illusion. The self actor steps forward and habits are engaged. The moment goes from a casual sense contact to being personal. Self-judgments and prejudice are projected onto the experience from a grab bag of habits. A visual image is ugly or beautiful; sounds are soothing or annoying; taste is bitter or appealing; smell is fragrant or disgusting; touch is painful or soothing; thoughts are agreeable or a nightmare. That's the ugliest thing I've ever seen (sight). Umm, whatever you're cooking smells great (scent). The coffee is bitter (taste). The neighbor's dog kept me up all night barking (sound). I have a rash on my skin (tactile). I'm not voting for him (mind). Motives as a prattling on subconscious dialogue compel one to react. Missing the Conditions Arising truth, behind it all is a misunderstanding of life and reality as self.

Settled and centered, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. When a pleasant feeling arises, note the attraction. Acknowledge the attempt to prolong the pleasure. Follow how the self actor seeks out comfort, joy and delightful. In contrast a painful feeling is like a fish struggling on a hook. Recognize how frustration and anger arise. Nothing is worse than not getting one's way. Follow how the mind narrows as upset and frustration. Neutral moments are all together ignored. Self wants to be amused and easily becomes restless.

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Discern how habits dominate one as a self actor. Observed is life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Conditions Arising causes and effects as a purposeful action underscores all life and reality.

Note how feelings are affected. Carried over and renewed with every experience and encounter is a long habitual history. Mistaking life as self, the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle moves forward.

Following a Middle Way appreciation away from self extremes, habits aren't indulged. Acknowledge how the breath relaxes and the mind refines as a Wise Reflection. A brief intervention from the Conditions Arising cycle is experienced. Without self-promoted actions escalating, suffering abates.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact connects with the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact notes contacted feelings; Interest acknowledges the reaction to feelings; 'Joy' turns away from feelings to a Middle Way appreciation not dominated by self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns the purposeful action of Conditions Arising.

I think of myself as what I feel. Feeling, however, doesn't mean self and self doesn't mean feeling.

June 9—Craving, the Everyday Arising*

“Craving is impermanent, conditioned, dependently arising, subject to destruction, vanishing, fading away and cessation. This is called dependently arisen phenomena.” SN 12, 20 (10)

Through these conditions arising, these actions then come to be—
through the conditions of feelings, craving as a mistaken self-identity arises.

Through craving the self actor steps out from the subconscious shadows to actively take center stage. Craving is regarded as ‘seamstress-like’ because of how it joins past habits with a present encounter and then carries over to future actions and consequences. Dormant, active and transgressing habits come alive seeking expression. Craving has three levels as sense pleasures are pursued; upholding a self-identity; and, finally, there is craving to flee from self entirely (mistaking a self-singularity rather than recognizing the many actions giving the illusion of the ‘one’). Note the causes and effects pattern as feelings ignite craving.

A Pandora’s Box of self potential, an instant before there was feeling and self was a faint whisper. Now follow how self-identification roars to flourish as an out-of-control karmic intention. Acknowledge how craving keeps one unsettled and frantic. Note the excitement surrounding sensory pleasure. Following the inner monologue, realize the craving after a self-identity. Every impulse is to fulfill and keep a self-delusion going, and when the experience is challenging one craves to get away.

Settled and centered, Wisely Reflect on body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Recognize how craving joins with flourishing habits to then carry over as a future self-promoted scenario. Relax craving’s grip and allow the habits to slowly quiet and disperse. Feel the relief and settling as craving’s urgency dissipates.

Discern how habits get the better of one as a self actor. Observed is life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Conditions Arising causes and effects as a purposeful action underscores all life and reality.

Acknowledge how self-obsession for craving affects one. Carried over and renewed with every experience and encounter is a long habitual history. Mistaking life as self, the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle moves forward.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

Following a Middle Way appreciation away from self extremes, habits aren't indulged. Acknowledge how the breath relaxes and the mind refines through Wise Reflection. A brief intervention from the Conditions Arising cycle is experienced. Without self-promoted actions escalating, suffering abates.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact connects with the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact notes how craving emerges and goes on to connect with past habitual intentions; Interest acknowledges the thought forming around craving to carry over as an action potential; 'Joy' turns away from craving to a Middle Way appreciation not dominated by self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns the purposeful action of Conditions Arising.

I take craving to be a natural part of life. As a self actor I'm always wanting, identifying or trying to escape. In other words, I make myself suffer.

June 10—Attachment, the Everyday Arising*

“Clinging [attachment] is impermanent, conditioned, dependently arising, subject to destruction, vanishing, fading away and cessation. This is called dependently arisen phenomena.” SN 12, 20 (10)

Through these conditions arising, these actions then come to be—
through the conditions of craving, attachment as a mistaken self-identity arises.

Caught up in sensually, short-lived instances, experienced are the attachment in order to fulfill a self-ideal. Attachment is an intensification of craving, a clinging and obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. The body weakens, taken to be self; feelings constantly change, are tried to prolong; perception is an all-consuming self-centered judgment; mental reactions as a personal experience make-up a self-byline; and conscious attention is mistaken as a self-recognition. Note the causes and effects pattern as craving intensifies to attachment.

When moments inevitably changes annoyance and frustration creep in and a habitual self actor dominates. Most people are caught up by sensual experiences, attached to views and rationalize. Thinking one is right (even if you are!), one is stubbornly at odds with others and the world at large. Humility is difficult for self to accept.

Settled and centered, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Feel the strain and stress self-focus takes on life. Note how craving then reaches out to become attachment. Feel how the body is affected by attachment as the breath's quality is labored, face tense, along with abdominal and pelvic pressure. Follow how the mind narrows to attach and cling as a self-identification. Subconscious chatter reflects a self-consumed character. Acknowledge the burden involved in being a self actor.

Discern how habits get the better of one as a self actor. Observed is life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Conditions Arising causes and effects as a purposeful action underscores all life and reality.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

Acknowledge how self-obsession as attachment affects one. Carried over and renewed with every experience and encounter is a long habitual history. Mistaking life as self, the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle moves forward.

Following a Middle Way appreciation away from self extremes, habits aren't indulged. Acknowledge how the breath relaxes and the mind refines through Wise Reflection. A brief intervention from the Conditions Arising cycle is experienced. Without self-promoted actions escalating, suffering abates.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact connects with the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact notes craving intensifying as attachment; Interest acknowledges the compulsion to act; 'Joy' turns away from the attachment to a Middle Way appreciation not dominated by self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns the purposeful action of Conditions Arising.

I can't deny, my self-attachment for the body, feelings, perception, mental reactions, and conscious attention. Self is all I've known and live for. Here I'm beginning to understand and realizing life correctly.

June 11—Commitment, the Everyday Arising*

“Existence [commitment] is impermanent, conditioned, dependently arising, subject to destruction, vanishing, fading away and cessation. This is called dependently arisen phenomena.” SN 12, 20 (10)

Through these conditions arising, these actions then come to be—
through the conditions of attachment, commitment as a mistaken self-identity arises.

Commitment is how one actively chooses and is undermined by habits or motives. This is like having the right to vote. One has a legitimate say to live intelligently, responsibly and wisely, or to live a careless, problematic life. Greedy, hateful and confusing habits thrive under the right conditions. As a creature of habit, life is compromised as a self actor. Note the causes and effects pattern as attachment gives way to commitment.

Acknowledge how subconscious habit intentions are compromising. Note how dormant, active and transgressing habit impulses come to be and are expressed. Deep-seated habitual impulses are overwhelming. Self leads to suffering while a Middle Way appreciation follows to recognition and fulfillment. Here one goes from putting a hand in the cookie jar to Wisely Reflecting and putting the brakes on habitual impulses.

Settled and centered, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Note how self-identified conceit and restlessness affects the breath, physical tension and mental confusion. A stream of conscious chatter, listen to the inner monologue and follow how actions form around greedy, hateful and confusing habit choices.

Acknowledge how craving arises to join with subconscious motives then attaching as an active commitment to put the habit to work. Acknowledge the stress and burden. Transgressing thoughts, speech, and actions go on to play out.

Discern how habits get the better of one as a self actor. Observed is life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Conditions Arising causes and effects as a purposeful action underscores all life and reality.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

Note how a self-obsession for commitment affects one. Carried over and renewed with every experience and encounter is a long habitual history. Mistaking life as self, the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle moves forward.

As a Middle Way appreciation away from self extremes, habits aren't indulged. Acknowledge how the breath relaxes and the mind refines through Wise Reflection. A brief intervention from the Conditions Arising cycle is experienced. Without self-promoted actions escalating, suffering abates.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact connects with the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact notes the commit to act through greed, hatred or confusion; Interest acknowledges how the habit is chosen; 'Joy' turns away from commitment to a Middle Way appreciation not dominated by self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns the purposeful action of Conditions Arising.

I choose to act and be who I am, or rather my habits get the better of me and I carelessly follow along. Here I'm aware how I commit to being a self actor.

June 12—Life-Action or Acting, the Everyday Arising*

Conditions Arising Future— life-action, problems and suffering

“Birth [life-action or acting] is impermanent, conditioned, dependently arising, subject to destruction, vanishing, fading away and cessation. This is called dependently arisen phenomena.” SN 12, 20 (10)

Through these conditions arising, these actions then come to be—
through the conditions of commitment, life-actions as a mistaken self-identity arises.

Affected by a flurry of dizzying habit potential, a self actor reacts. Wanting to get ahead, hold on to what one has, try for more or something different, fears, jealousy, authority, power and outright craziness dominate. Life is underscored by purposeful action. From many options and possibilities, habits dominate and win out. For example, if you have ever played a board game with adults uncensored self will is experienced. A quiet, good-natured person suddenly becomes aggressive and gloating. The current dilemma of road rage during commutes shows people’s darker side. Underlying motivates go on to make-up life-actions. Note the causes and effects as commitment gives way to life-actions.

Follow how habits subtly and not so subtly take over. Self-promotion surges up from the subconscious as habits go on to affect thoughts, speech and actions. Flashing dormant impulses play out as transgressing actions. A limited self-view and behavior are compromising.

Settled and centered, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Acknowledge how the breath is labored and attention narrows as a self-pursuit. Realize how habits charge and compel one on to suffering actions as self-expressions. Experiences, events, situations and circumstances don’t happen haphazardly but as a Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action—careless or wise. Greed, hatred and confusion stand out. Unfortunately a self-plagued nature wins out. Life isn’t suffering when you are aware and Wisely Reflecting. Subconscious actions exposed, a self-compromised intention is unsettling.

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Discern how habits get the better of one as a self actor. Observed is life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Conditions Arising causes and effects as a purposeful action underscores all life and reality.

Note how self-attachment for life affects one. Carried over and renewed with every experience and encounter is a long habitual history. Mistaking life to be self, the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle moves forward.

Following a Middle Way appreciation away from self extremes, habits aren't indulged. Acknowledge how the breath relaxes and the mind refines through Wise Reflection. A brief intervention from the Conditions Arising cycle is experienced. Without self-promoted actions escalating, suffering abates.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact connects with the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact acknowledges the habitual action being put into place; Interest moves to engage the action; 'Joy' turns away from the action to a Middle Way appreciation not dominated by self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns the purposeful action of Conditions Arising.

Things don't happen randomly, but from my choices. Before I was unaware and easily succumbed to my habits. Now I know better and realize what I'm thinking, doing and where I'm headed.

June 13—Problems and Suffering, the Everyday Arising**

“Aging and death [problems and suffering] is impermanent, conditioned, dependently arising, subject to destruction, vanishing, fading away and cessation. This is called dependently arisen phenomena.” SN 12, 20 (10)

Through these conditions arising, these actions then come to be— through the conditions of life-actions, problems and suffering as a mistaken self-identity arise.

There is literal aging and death challenging everyone, but nagging habits go on to further compound problems and suffering. Conditions Arising moves by so quickly that only by meditating are the complex patterns and implications discerned. A self-image clashes with reality (impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and non-self). Self-consumed habits are born out and expressed. With each moment there are countless ‘births and deaths,’ let downs, displeasures and loss. It is precisely as a self actor that problems and suffering arise. Note the causes and effects pattern as life-actions erupt as problems and suffering.

Worldly pursuits and experiences complicate life. Feel the unsettling chatter of motives. Needing, wanting, angry, fearful, doubting and confused, non-stop self-inspired behavior thrives.

Settled and centered, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Observed is life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Conditions Arising causes and effects as a purposeful action underscores all life and reality. Subconscious actions exposed, a self-compromised intention is unsettling.

Discern how habits get the better of one as a self actor. Observed is life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. Conditions Arising causes and effects as a purposeful action underscores all life and reality.

Note how self-obsession detrimentally affects one. Carried over and renewed with every experience and encounter is a long habitual history. Mistaking life to be self, the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle moves forward.

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Following a Middle Way appreciation away from self extremes, habits aren't indulged. Acknowledge how the breath relaxes and the mind refines through Wise Reflection. A brief intervention from the Conditions Arising cycle is experienced. Without self-promoted actions escalating, suffering abates.

Awareness Focusing as concentration: Initial Contact connects with the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact follows how actions bring about suffering; Interest as awareness for generated habits; 'Joy' turns away from self-suffering to a Middle Way appreciation not dominated by self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns the purposeful action of Conditions Arising causes and effects.

I suffer because I thought self to be real. I was mistaken. I direct my awareness as a Wise Reflection to realize how and why I suffer as a self actor.

June 14—Misunderstanding (Ignorance), the Great Arising*

“Conditions Arising is profound and appears profound; it is truly very difficult to penetrate. Because [you] have not understood and penetrated this one principle, beings are caught on the wheel of birth and death and cannot find the means to freedom.” DN 15

As a purposeful action, misunderstanding conditions and gives way to self-deception arising.

Conditions Arising at its deepest level reflects a misunderstanding (ignorance) of life and reality and the truth needed to be realized in order to end self-promoted suffering. The insight to Conditions Arising follows the course of purposeful action as the many actions join to give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self. Misunderstanding, life and reality are seen as one-dimensional or self-defined. Unable to go beyond this disorienting self-focus, one isn’t able to penetrate the wisdom to liberation—the Four Noble Truths (Detailed in July, the Four Truths highlight suffering, its origin, cessation, and the way to ending suffering.). Overlooking the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle, this present Sense Realm body/mind connection for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification is misunderstood (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention). Until Conditions Arising along with the Four Noble Truths are fully distinguished and comprehended, attachments to a self-notion and sordid habits win out.

Acknowledge the affect misunderstanding has generating habitual actions and falling victim to a confused behavior. Trying to fulfill and uphold a self-notion, the self-ideal is closer to a sand castle washed away by life’s constantly changing and demanding affects. Realize how exhausting a self-fantasy is only to see it repeatedly wiped out. Acknowledge how self-conceit affects the breath’s quality as physical exhaustion and mental confusion. Listen to the ongoing self-absorbed monologue. Follow how self-identification gives way to careless impulses as thought formations swirl by, then escalating to craving and keeping one restless. The subconscious discerned, follow how dormant, active and transgressing behavior comes to be. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification and reality are misunderstood as there is no true self.

Settled and focused, follow the awareness for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Separating from the misunderstanding that burdens one, follow the breath’s tranquil flow as well as clarifying awareness.

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Acknowledge the Conditions Arising causes and effects forward driven urgency. A self-delusion charges life. Feel the obsession and clinging to a self-notion. Note the subconscious provocations and the affect self has as a general dissatisfaction and restlessness. At every instance and with each experience, the self-consumed history is renewed and transferred. Insight for the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle turns one away from self-suffering.

Allow self-attachment to relax, clear and slowly disperse. It can be unnerving to move away from the dominating self-identification held so dearly. Follow the change in the breath's quality, physical presence calming and emerging mental clarity. A Middle Way appreciation from self extremes detaches from self-domination. Feel the general relief as self-deception weakens. Note how the self-absorbed monologue quiets down and attention settles. Acknowledge how dormant, active and transgressing habit expressions are temporarily subdued.

As an intensified Wise Reflection, recognize the causes and effects related to self-obsession. Not understanding life correctly, a misconstrued self-consciousness goes on to form. From these conditions, self-suffering persists. Following a Middle Way guidance of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, self-fixation and associated conditions bring one to suffer.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges the confusion surrounding a self actor; Sustained Contact notes the physical tension and mental stress; Interest settles into the meditative moment detaching from a self-centered confusion; 'Joy' turns away from a self-misconstrued focus to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity penetrates Conditions Arising to discern life and reality as non-self and averts self-promoted actions.

I've lived confused and suffered as a result of my self-obsession.

June 15—Thought-Formations, the Greater Arising*

“From ignorance as a requisite condition come [mental] fabrications.” SN 12, 2

As a purposeful action, misunderstanding conditions and gives way to self-perceived thought formations arising.

Not recognizing the non-self nature of life and reality, an underlying self-disposition forms. A frenzy of self-associated thoughts, one-sided, schemes, fantasies, intentions and bias are engaged. Self-expressions follow as greed, hatred and confusion.

Note how a subconscious monologue provokes a self-absorbed energy. Voices echo and fade, images flash then disappear as a general self-impression forms. Feel how the self-disposition constricts, burdens, compromises and is literally suffocating. As a stressed conceit and restlessness, the breath quality is compromised as well as physical tension affected along with mental confusion taking a toll. Conditioned by misunderstanding life, a self-illusion forms.

Specifically, with the body’s vitality weakening, a dying person’s final self-directed thought goes on to transfer and join with an impregnated fetus as an injected conscious spark. The many actions giving the illusion of the ‘one,’ the conditions of male sperm, female ovum and fertile period, the dying person’s stream of conscious energy carries over. This isn’t an identical self-energy or soul that is transferred, but a general habitual disposition and a strong-willed connection for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification.

Some habits play out quickly and others follow much longer instances before reaching fruition. The normal time line doesn’t apply. Actions are conditioned by a self-deception. Beneficial actions follow comfort, good standing and a moral high ground, while detrimental actions give way to sensual indulgence and suffering consequences. A pervasive self-related confusion persists throughout the Conditions Arising cycle.

Note how self-identified conceit and accompanying restlessness affect the breath, along with physical tension and mental confusion. The subconscious monologue reveals how self-consumed habits form. Acknowledge how misunderstanding in

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general goes on to be divisive. In each instance of experience a self-pattern forms and is followed.

Settled and focused, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Separating from the misunderstanding that burdens one, follow the breath's tranquil flow as well as clarifying awareness.

Acknowledge the Conditions Arising causes and effects forward driven urgency. Mistaking thought formations, revealed is how an underlying self-delusion charges life. Feel the obsession and clinging to a self-notion. Note the subconscious provocations and the affect self has as a general dissatisfaction and restlessness. At every instance and with each experience, a self-consumed history is renewed. Insight for the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle turns one away from self-suffering.

Allow self-attachments to relax, clear and slowly disperse. It can be unnerving to move away from the dominating self-identification held so dearly. Follow the change in the breath's quality, physical presence calming and emerging mental clarity. A Middle Way appreciation from self extremes detaches from self-domination. Feel as the burden for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification frees up as general relief from self-deception. Note how the self-absorbed monologue quiets down and attention settles. Acknowledge how dormant, active and transgressing habit expressions are temporarily subdued.

As an intensified Wise Reflect, recognize the causes and effects related to self-obsession. Not understanding life correctly, a misconstrued self-consciousness goes on to form. From these conditions, self-suffering persists. Following a Middle Way guidance of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, self-fixation and associated conditions bring one to suffer.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges the disturbance surrounding thought-formations as a self actor arising; Sustained Contact notes the physical tension and mental stress; Interest settles into the meditative moment detaching from the self-centered thought-formations; 'Joy' turns away from the thought-formation to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity penetrates Conditions Arising to discern life and reality as non-self and avert self-promoted actions.

My life and experiences just don't happen. All along, I've been willing and promoting a self-relationship. There is a profound recognition here for my self-delusion.

June 16—Present Consciousness, the Greater Arising*

“From fabrications as a requisite condition comes consciousness.” SN 12, 2

As a purposeful action, thought-formations condition and give way to a self-perceived consciousness arising.

A stream of ongoing linked experiences (the many actions giving the illusion of the ‘one’ or self), consciousness surfaces as a mistaken self-identity. Flashing as thought-formations, this stream of consciousness carries over and continues throughout all experiences. At death the decease’s strongest or most compelling habit energy transfers over to persist as a renewed self-identification. Past actions condition a present consciousness and the present in turn conditions and affects future conscious interactions.

As a general self-disposition in the fetus-to-be, usually it is Weighty or Habitual Karma that begets this self-patterned stream of consciousness. If the dominating impression is wholesome then a favorable life is possible. If the dominating impression is unwholesome then suffering is likely. Conditions Arising as purposeful action underscores both. This isn’t fate or destiny because all along there is the capacity for free will, responsibility as well as for wisdom regarding self-involvement. Acknowledge how the self-conceit forms along with restlessness to a present stirred consciousness driven by self-absorbed thought-formations or motives. In the case of a human in the Sense Realm, a body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification stands out. A persisting subconscious monologue and flashing associated habit actions are followed. These self-associated actions form as a conscious pattern defining and seeking out a self-conclusion. Settled and focused, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Separating from the misunderstanding that burdens one, follow the breath’s tranquil flow as well as clarifying awareness.

Acknowledge the Conditions Arising causes and effects forward driven urgency. Mistaking Present Consciousness, revealed is how an underlying self-delusion charges life. Feel how the obsession and clinging to a self-notion. Note the subconscious provocations and the affects self has as a general dissatisfaction and restlessness. At every instance and with each experience, the whole of a self-consumed history is renewed and transferred. Insight for the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle turns one away from self-suffering.

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Allow self-attachments to relax, clear and slowly disperse. It can be unnerving to move away from the dominating self-identification held so dearly. Follow the change in the breath's quality, physical presence calming and emerging mental clarity. A Middle Way appreciation from self extremes detaches from self-domination. Feel the general relief as self-deception weakens. Note how the self-absorbed monologue quiets down and attention settles. Acknowledge how dormant, active and transgressing habit expressions are temporarily subdued.

As an intensified Wise Reflection, recognize the causes and effects related to self-obsession. Misunderstanding, a misconstrued self-consciousness goes on to form. From these conditions, self-suffering persists. Following a Middle Way guidance of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, self-attachment is defused.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges the present consciousness as a self actor arising; Sustained Contact notes the physical tension and mental stress; Interest settles into the meditative moment detaching from a present formed self-consciousness; 'Joy' turns away from the present consciousness to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity penetrates Conditions Arising to discern life and reality as non-self and avert self-promoted actions.

I see how a self-fantasy dominates my consciousness and compels me on as a self actor.

June 17—Body/Mind Identification, the Greater Arising*

“From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-and-form [body/mind].’ Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-and-form. If consciousness were not to descend into the mother’s womb, would name-and-form take shape in the womb?...If, after descending into the womb, consciousness were to depart, would name-and-form be produced for this world?...If the consciousness of the young boy or girl were to be cut off, would name-and-form ripen, grow, and reach maturity?...Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for name-and-form, i.e., consciousness.” DN 15

As a purposeful action, present consciousness conditions and gives way to a self-perceived body/mind identification arising.

The body/mind union forms a self-grand illusion. Already developing in the fetus as a limited and weak conscious recognition, in the microscopic cell of an embryo thrives a budding humanity. Craving after sensual desire, a self-identity or seeking to escape, a body/mind association is mistaken as the be all and end all reference. A Sense Realm role playing, the body is taken to be self; feelings are experienced as pleasant, painful or neutral self-reactions; perception judges, labels and identifies; mental reactions dominate as a personality; and conscious attention is a general self-take on life. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification together are the vehicle of preference, interacting with the world at large and play out as a false-identity.

Settled and focused, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Separating from the misunderstanding that burdens one, follow the breath’s tranquil flow as well as clarifying awareness.

Acknowledge the Conditions Arising causes and effects forward driven urgency. Mistaking the body/mind association, revealed is how an underlying self-delusion charges life. Feel the obsession and clinging to a self-notion. A Middle Way appreciation separated from self extremes detaches from self-domination. Note the subconscious provocations and the affect self has as a general dissatisfaction and restlessness. At every instance and with each experience, the whole of a self-

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consumed history is renewed and transferred over. Insight for the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle turns one away from self-suffering.

Allow self-attachment to relax, clear and slowly disperse. It can be unnerving to move away from the dominating self-identification held so dearly. Follow the change in the breath's quality, physical presence calming and emerging mental clarity. Mistaking Present Consciousness, revealed is how an underlying self-delusion charges life. Feel the general relief as self-deception weakens. Note how the self-absorbed monologue quiets down and attention settles. Acknowledge how dormant, active and transgressing habit expressions are temporarily subdued.

As an intensified Wise Reflection, recognize the causes and effects related to self-obsession. Misunderstanding, a misconstrued self-consciousness goes on to form. From these conditions, self-suffering persists. Following a Middle Way guidance of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, self-attachment is defused.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges the body/mind identification as a self actor arising; Sustained Contact notes the physical tension and mental states; Interest settles into the meditative moment detaching from a body/mind identification; 'Joy' turns away from the body/mind identification to a Middle Way removed from self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity penetrates Conditions Arising to discern the true nature of life and reality as non-self and avert self-promoted actions.

The stress and pressures are intense. Many conditions and influences bring me to a body/mind identification.

June 18—Senses Contacts, the Greater Arising*

“From name-and-form [body/mind] as a requisite condition come the six sense media.” SN 12, 2

As a purposeful action, a body/mind identification conditions and gives way to self-perceived sense contacts arising.

From the beginning as an embryo in the womb the six senses are very much alive. The eyes, ears, nose, tongue, tactile as well as the mind experience a limited function. Once outside the womb, the senses continue developing and maturing, interacting with the world at large. Mistaken as self-related, the sense organs are acutely sensitive and become an all-consuming focus. The eyes absorb light to take in colors and forms, ears are sensitive to sound vibrations, the nose experiences smells and odors, the tongue absorbs tastes, skin is sensitive to touch and temperature, and the mind cognizes the full array of sensory overload.

There is no moment (not even during meditation) without sensory contact. Yes, there are sensations but don't be overwhelmed by them. Through renunciation and restraint, self-indulged gratification doesn't dominate. Sense contacts are a distraction. Breathing labored, note the tension at the forehead, pressure at the back of the eyes, and the mind narrows and is stressed. Acknowledge the arising and fading of moments as so many contacted conditions. Yes, there is contact, but one doesn't go on to be affected as an impulsive self actor, but is wisely connected.

Settled and focused, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Separating from the misunderstanding that burdens one, follow the breath's tranquil flow as well as clarifying awareness.

Acknowledge the Conditions Arising causes and effects forward driven urgency. Mistaking the sense contacts, revealed is how an underlying self-delusion charges life. Feel the obsession and clinging to a self-notion. As a Middle Way appreciation separated from the self extremes of indulgence and aggression, detach from self-domination. Note the subconscious provocations and the affect self has on you as a general dissatisfaction and restlessness. At every instance and with each experience, the whole of a self-consumed history is renewed and transferred. Insight for the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle turns one away from self-suffering.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

Allow self-attachment to relax, clear and slowly disperse. It can be unnerving to move away from the dominating self-identification held so dearly. Follow the change in the breath's quality, physical presence calming and emerging mental clarity. A Middle Way appreciation separated from self extremes detaches from self-domination. Feel the general relief as self-deception weakens. Note how the self-absorbed monologue quiets down and attention settles. Acknowledge how dormant, active and transgressing habit expressions are temporarily subdued.

As an intensified Wise Reflection, recognize the causes and effects related to self-obsession. Misunderstanding, a misconstrued self-consciousness goes on to form. From these conditions, self-suffering persists. Following a Middle Way guidance of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, self-attachment is defused.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges sense contacted stimulation as a self actor arising; Sustained Contact notes the physical tension and mental states; Interest settles into the meditative moment detaching from sense contacted stimulation; 'Joy' turns away from sense contacts to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity penetrates Conditions Arising to discern life and reality as non-self and avert self-promoted actions.

With so much action and stimulation, my senses are overwhelmed and I'm left confused and exhausted. Here I'm able to now settle down and realize the experience for what it is without reacting to it.

June 19—Sense Impressions, the Great Arising*

“From the six sense media as a requisite condition comes contact.” SN 12, 2

As a purposeful action, sense-contacts condition and give way to a self-perceived sense-impressions arising.

Sense impressions are experienced through the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin and mind, and are then personally related to and a self-response provoked.

Each sense organ works independently and arises from external sense-contacted stimulation and through its own set of conditions: conditioned by light, forms and the eyes, vision arises; conditioned by sounds and the ears, hearing arises; conditioned by food and nourishing delicacy and the tongue, taste arises; conditioned by sensations and feelings, tactile experiences arise; conditioned by action in general, consciousness arises. This is how life in the Sense Realm is experienced and thrives.

Follow how sense impressions arise then go on to weaken and fade. Feel the relief as self-attachments free up. Reality is impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. As a Middle Way appreciation, be sensitive to how sense organ impulses are contacted and aroused. Open to the moment as a release from self-related reactions. Only the self actor is affected by sense impressions.

Settled and focused, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Separating from the misunderstanding that burdens one, follow the breath’s tranquil flow as well as clarifying awareness.

Acknowledge the Conditions Arising causes and effects forward driven urgency. Mistaking Sense Impressions, revealed is how an underlying self-delusion charges life. Feel the obsession and clinging to a self-notion. A Middle Way appreciation separated from self extremes detaches from self-domination. Note the subconscious provocations and the affect self has on you as a general dissatisfaction and restlessness. At every instance and with each experience, you renew and transfer over the whole of your self-consumed history. Insight for the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle turns one away from self-suffering.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

Allow self-attachment to relax, clear and slowly disperse. It can be unnerving to move away from the dominating self-identification held so dearly. Follow the change in the breath's quality, physical presence calming and emerging mental clarity. Feel the general relief as self-deception weakens. Note how the self-absorbed monologue quiets down and attention settles. Acknowledge how dormant, active and transgressing habit expressions are temporarily subdued.

As an intensified Wise Reflection, recognize the causes and effects related to self-obsession. Misunderstanding, a misconstrued self-consciousness goes on to form. From these conditions, self-suffering persists. Following a Middle Way guidance of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, self-attachment is defused.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges sense impressions arising; Sustained Contact notes the physical tension and mental states; Interest settles into the meditative moment detaching from sense impressions; 'Joy' turns away from sense impressions to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity penetrates Conditions Arising to discern life and reality as non-self and avert self-promoted actions.

The senses are stimulated and sense impressions form, but I don't have to relate to be consumed by them and carried away as a self actor. I watch myself not to get carried away.

June 20—Feelings, the Greater Arising*

“From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling.’ Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from contact as a requisite condition comes feeling. If there were no contact at all, in any way, of anything anywhere — i.e., contact at the eye, contact at the ear, contact at the nose, contact at the tongue, contact at the body, or contact at the intellect...Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for feeling, i.e., contact.” DN 15

As a purposeful action, sense impressions condition and give way to self-perceived feelings arising.

The quality of sense impressed experiences is known through feelings—pleasant, painful, or neutral. A degree of feeling is experienced at every moment. While a self-related stream of consciousness persists throughout all body/mind instances, it is here during feelings that habits and intentions surface as a self-reaction. The sense-contacted moment interpreted and identified, a self-preference takes place and is injected. Feelings go on to ignite craving (for desire, self-identity or as an escape) as self-attachments escalate. Follow how the sense-contacted pressures arise and fade. Pleasant feelings are soothing and desirable, painful feelings are harsh and uncomfortable, neutral feelings are generally ignored. Only the self actor is affected by feelings.

Acknowledge the self-absorbed strain and the accompanying restlessness generated by feelings. Rather than attach to pleasant moments, reject painful episodes, or ignore neutral instances, you are aware and detached without judging or indulging the felt experience.

Settled and focused, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Separating from the misunderstanding that burdens one, follow the breath’s tranquil flow as well as clarifying awareness.

Acknowledge the Conditions Arising causes and effects forward driven urgency. Mistaking feelings, revealed is how an underlying self-delusion charges life. Feel the obsession and clinging to a self-notion. A Middle Way appreciation separated from self extremes detaches from self-domination. Note the subconscious provocations and the affect self has as a general dissatisfaction and restlessness. At every

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instance and with each experience, the whole of a self-consumed history is renewed and transferred. Insight for the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle turns one away from self-suffering.

Allow self-attachment to relax, clear and slowly disperse. It can be unnerving to move away from the dominating self-identification held so dearly. Follow the change in the breath's quality, physical presence calming and emerging mental clarity. As a Middle Way appreciation from self extremes detaches from self-domination. Feel the general relief as self-deception weakens. Note how the self-absorbed monologue quiets down and attention settles. Acknowledge how dormant, active and transgressing habit expressions are temporarily subdued.

As an intensified Wise Reflection, recognize the causes and effects related to self-obsession. Misunderstanding, a misconstrued self-consciousness goes on to form. From these conditions, self-suffering persists. Following a Middle Way guidance of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, self-attachment is defused.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges feelings as reactions arising; Sustained Contact notes the physical tension and mental states; Interest settles into the meditative moment detaching from feelings; 'Joy' turns away from feelings to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity penetrates Conditions Arising to discern life and reality as non-self and avert self-promoted actions.

Feelings are like electric shocks making me jump in reaction. Vision, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental gratification lead me on. I realize how these actions play out and reinforce my self-delusion.

June 21—Craving, the Greater Arising*

“From feeling as a requisite condition comes craving.’ Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from feeling as a requisite condition comes craving. If there were no feeling at all, in any way, of anything anywhere — i.e., feeling born of contact at the eye, feeling born of contact at the ear, feeling born of contact at the nose, feeling born of contact at the tongue, feeling born of contact at the body, or feeling born of contact at the intellect...Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for craving, i.e., feeling.” DN 15

As a purposeful action, feelings condition and give way to a self-perceived craving arising.

An instance before as feeling, self was a faint whisper. Now through craving a self-notion intensifies to a deafening roar as motives surge forward. Craving after as delight and pleasure is a quantum leap to further suffering. Past defiling habits join with craving to carry over as future consequences and results.

Victimized by misunderstanding life and thriving under the right conditions, pressures, influences and elements, there is craving for desire, a self-identity or as an escape. Self-expectations are at odds with life in general. Craving is the actual moment when the subconscious dialogue as motives puts one on the fast track to suffering, choosing from a vast habit repertoire a convenient outcome. While misunderstanding or ignorance is at the center of suffering, craving continues the self-dilemma as past habits flare-up to merge and morph into future actions, keeping going the self-promoted Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle.

Gently begin to relax craving’s hold of delight and pleasure. Sense how self-attachments are overwhelming physically and as an ongoing mental stress for a body/mind identification. Craving leaves one dissatisfied, confused and suffering.

Unsettled, follow how craving emerges as a subliminal, karmic intent explosion to burst forth as a conscious experience. The subconscious revealed as flashing images and a pestering monologue, note how the self actor sizes up the moment to determine how best to fulfill self-expectations. A self-image and reactions are filtered through a misunderstanding of life and reality. Acknowledge the frenzy of

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calculating mental activity. As dominating habit pressures arise, note how craving continues promoting a self-ordeal.

Settled and focused, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Separating from the misunderstanding that burdens one, follow the breath's tranquil flow as well as clarifying awareness.

Acknowledge the Conditions Arising causes and effects forward driven urgency. Mistaking craving, revealed is how an underlying self-delusion charges life. Feel the obsession and clinging to a self-notion. A Middle Way appreciation separated from self extremes detaches from self-domination. Note the subconscious provocations and the affect self has as a general dissatisfaction and restlessness. At every instance and with each experience, the whole of a self-consumed history is renewed and transferred. Insight for the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle turns one away from self-suffering.

Allow self-attachment to relax, clear and slowly disperse. It can be unnerving to move away from the dominating self-identification held so dearly. Follow the change in the breath's quality, physical presence calming and emerging mental clarity. As a Middle Way appreciation separated from the self extremes of indulgence and aggression detaches from self-domination. Feel the general relief as self-deception weakens. Note how the self-absorbed monologue quiets down and attention settles. Acknowledge how dormant, active and transgressing habit expressions are temporarily subdued.

As an intensified Wise Reflection, recognize the causes and effects related to self-obsession. Misunderstanding, a misconstrued self-consciousness goes on to form. From these conditions, self-suffering persists. Following a Middle Way guidance of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, self-attachment is defused.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges craving after as delight and pleasure arising; Sustained Contact notes the physical tension and mental states; Interest settles into the meditative moment detaching from craving; 'Joy' turns away from craving to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity penetrates Conditions Arising to discern life and reality as non-self and avert self-promoted actions.

My habits bring me to craving. I then go on to justify my actions.

June 22—Attachment, the Greater Arising*

“From craving as a requisite condition comes clinging.’ Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from craving as a requisite condition comes clinging. If there were no craving at all, in any way, of anything anywhere — i.e., craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, craving for no becoming...Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for clinging, i.e., craving.” DN 15

As a purposeful action, craving conditions and gives way to a self-perceived attachment arising.

Attachment is an intensification of craving. Craving is reaching or putting a hand in the habit-filled Pandora’s Box while attachment goes on to pull out a habitual reaction. A victim of misunderstanding, one isn’t as free as first presumed.

There are four types of attachment:

Sensual Attachment—Here in the Sense Realm sense impressions dominate and an exhausting pursuit for sensual gratification is followed. Always to be undercut, the experiences are impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action.

Views Attachment—Opinions, ideas and philosophy are one-sided and slanted towards a self-preference. Adamant in self-justification, one falls into a self-deceived trap.

Precept and Practices Attachment—The Five Wise Actions are necessary and instrumental as a guideline, but one can go overboard as a disguised self-justification and have a superior-than-thou attitude and approach. Helping round out the rough character edges as responsibility for one’s actions, precepts don’t support a self-notion but curtail it. Follow the Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes for indulgence and aggression.

Self-View Attachment—Misunderstand life and reality, the non-self is taken (the many actions giving the illusion of the ‘one’) as a separate individual and unique person or soul. From this mistaken view a confused life follows.

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Settled and focused, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Separating from the misunderstanding that burdens one, follow the breath's tranquil flow as well as clarifying awareness.

Acknowledge the Conditions Arising causes and effects forward driven urgency. Mistaking attachment, revealed is how an underlying self-delusion charges life. Feel the obsession and clinging to a self-notion. Note the subconscious provocations and the affect self has on you as a general dissatisfaction and restlessness. At every instance and with each experience, a self-consumed history is renewed and transferred. Insight for the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle turns one away from self-suffering.

Allow self-attachment to relax, clear and slowly disperse. It can be unnerving to move away from the dominating self-identification held so dearly. Follow the change in the breath's quality, physical presence calming and emerging mental clarity. A Middle Way appreciation separated from self extremes detaches from self-domination. Feel the general relief as self-deception weakens. Note how the self-absorbed monologue quiets down and attention settles. Acknowledge how dormant, active and transgressing habit expressions are temporarily subdued.

As an intensified Wise Reflection, recognize the causes and effects related to self-obsession. Misunderstanding, a misconstrued self-consciousness goes on to form. From these conditions, self-suffering persists. Following a Middle Way guidance of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, self-attachment is defused.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges attachment as a self actor arising; Sustained Contact notes the physical tension and mental states; Interest settles into the meditative moment detaching from attachment; 'Joy' turns away from attachment to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity penetrates Conditions Arising to discern life and reality as non-self and avert self-promoted actions.

Craving to uphold a self-image, I'm attached to many things. I feel the pressure that I put on myself.

June 23—Commitment, the Greater Arising*

“From clinging as a requisite condition comes becoming.’ Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from clinging as a requisite condition comes becoming. If there were no clinging at all, in any way, of anything anywhere — i.e., clinging to sensuality, clinging to precepts and practices, clinging to views, or clinging to doctrines of the self... Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for becoming, i.e., clinging.” DN 15

As a purposeful action, attachment conditions and gives way to a self-perceived commitment arising.

Commitment is actively selecting a response from the habit repertoire. This is like having the right to vote. Unfortunately, impulsive self-serving needs dominate. Greed, hatred and confusion come alive under the right conditions. Self-deception compromises life.

Note how self-related conceit and restlessness affect the breath’s quality, make for physical stress, and add to mental confusion. A stream of conscious dialogue reveals a flurry of provocative behavior. Follow how dormant, active and transgressing habits flash. Feel as a habit energy surges to push through to spawn transgressing actions and leads to suffering consequences. Acknowledge the self-conflicted burden and dominating habitual history.

Settled and focused, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Separating from the misunderstanding that burdens one, follow the breath’s tranquil flow as well as clarifying awareness.

Acknowledge the Conditions Arising causes and effects forward driven urgency. Mistaking commitment, revealed is how an underlying self-delusion charges life. Feel the obsession and clinging to a self-notion. Note the subconscious provocations and the affect self has on you as a general dissatisfaction and restlessness. At every instance and with each experience, the whole of a self-consumed history is renewed and transferred. Insight for the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle turns one away from self-suffering.

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Allow self-attachment to relax, clear and slowly disperse. It can be unnerving to move away from the dominating self-identification held so dearly. Follow the change in the breath's quality, physical presence calming and emerging mental clarity. A Middle Way appreciation separated from self extremes detaches from self-domination. Feel the general relief as self-deception weakens. Note how the self-absorbed monologue quiets down and attention settles. Acknowledge how dormant, active and transgressing habit expressions are temporarily subdued.

As an intensified Wise Reflection, recognize the causes and effects related to self-obsession. Misunderstanding, a misconstrued self-consciousness goes on to form. From these conditions, self-suffering persists. Following a Middle Way guidance of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, self-attachment is defused.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges commitment as a self actor arising; Sustained Contact notes the physical tension and mental states; Interest settles into the meditative moment detaching from commitment; 'Joy' turns away from commitment to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extreme; and having One-Pointed Clarity penetrates Conditions Arising to discern life and reality as non-self and avert self-promoted actions.

Most of the time my choices and decisions aren't well thought out. I realize the deeper involvement of my habits. Self-expectations undermine my life.

June 24—Life-Actions, the Greater Arising*

“From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth.’ Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from becoming as a requisite condition comes birth. If there were no becoming at all, in any way, of anything anywhere — i.e., sensual becoming, form becoming, or formless becoming)...Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for birth, i.e., becoming.” DN 15

As a purposeful action, commitment conditions and gives way to self-perceived life-actions arising.

Compelled by strong habits, careless and compromising actions are actively engaged. ‘Birth’ is given to a self-actor illusion. As a profound realization for Conditions Arising, recognize how past actions carry over, are presently engaged and craved after, then lead to future consequences. At each instance, experience and encounter self-accumulated deception transfers over. Acknowledge the self-conceit and the restlessness derived from self-attachments.

Carried away by a mistaken self-identity, one plunges head long into self-promoted actions. Sensual desire is pursued, hatred arises as an indignation or when inconvenienced, while confusion, doubt and worry are tormenting. Seemingly easier to go with the first impulse, Wise Reflection and following a Middle Way appreciation are a detour from the Conditions Arising suffering cycle. At the dying person’s last thought, the dominating habit energy transfers over to give ‘birth’ and continue the self-obsessed consciousness to join with an impregnated embryo. In this way the suffering cycle persists and is unending.

Follow how misunderstanding distorts reality as a body/mind identification. Habit actions relating to self-deception lead to suffering consequences. Insight Meditation and a Middle Way appreciation reveal a self-delusion. Wisely Reflecting, follow the Five Wise Actions, having renunciation and restraint, one detaches from compromising subconscious impulses.

Settled and focused, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Separating from the misunderstanding that burdens one, follow the breath’s tranquil flow as well as clarifying awareness.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

Acknowledge the Conditions Arising causes and effects forward driven urgency. Mistaking life-actions, revealed is how an underlying self-delusion charges life. Feel the obsession and clinging to a self-notion. A Middle Way appreciation separated from self extremes detaches from self-domination. Note the subconscious provocations and the affect self has on one as a general dissatisfaction and restlessness. At every instance and with each experience, the whole self-consumed history is renewed and transferred. Insight for the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle turns one away from self-suffering.

Allow self-attachment to relax, clear and slowly disperse. It can be unnerving to move away from the dominating self-identification held so dearly. Follow the change in the breath's quality, physical presence calming and emerging mental clarity. As a Middle Way appreciation separated from the self extremes of indulgence and aggression detaches from self-domination. Feel the general relief as self-deception weakens. Note how the self-absorbed monologue quiets down and attention settles. Acknowledge how dormant, active and transgressing habit expressions are temporarily subdued.

As an intensified Wise Reflection, recognize the causes and effects related to self-obsession. Misunderstanding, a misconstrued self-consciousness goes on to form. From these conditions, self-suffering persists. Following a Middle Way guidance of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, self-attachment is defused.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges the life-actions arising and forming as a self actor; Sustained Contact notes the physical tension and mental states; Interest settles into the meditative moment detaching from life-actions; 'Joy' turns away from life-actions to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity penetrates Conditions Arising to discern life and reality as non-self and avert self-promoted actions.

I see how my actions have me promoting a self-actor. Through desire, anger and confusion I give birth to compromising actions. Now Wisely Reflecting, I have insight to control the self actor.

June 25—Problems and Suffering, the Greater Arising*

“From birth as a requisite condition come aging and death.’ Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from birth as a requisite condition come aging and death. If there were no birth at all, in any way, of anything anywhere — (i.e., of human beings in the human state, of quadrupeds in the state of quadrupeds, of birds in the state of birds, of snakes in the state of snakes, or of any being in its own state)...Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for aging and death, i.e., birth.” DN 15

As a purposeful action, life-actions condition and give way to self-perceived problems and suffering arising.

There is the general challenge and suffering for how impermanence affects everything, but actions go on to have a far reaching impact. From one careless mishap to the next, life is troubling. Being angry or frustrated, a white-lie spoken, stealing, sexual promiscuity, indulging in alcohol or drugs—hardships reflect a self-obsession. Motives or karma are like a flame which spark under the right conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Craving links together the past and goes on to transfer a self-habitual nature. Never the exact same energy, but through a basic body/mind identification a similar habit pattern plays out. Every thought, spoken word and action matters. Dormant, active and transgressing habit potentials thrive under the right conditions.

Acknowledge the consuming subconscious self-monologue. Desire, hate and confusion give birth to a self actor. A mistaken self-identity snowballs and past habits arise under the right conditions to join with craving and carry over. Meditation allows one to slow down and discern life as actions rather than self-related. Discerned is the Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action cycle. With nothing happening or occurring at random, fathom how you will yourself as a self actor. A Middle Way appreciation detaches from the self-obsession. Self-promoting actions are stopped.

Settled and focused, Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Separating from the misunderstanding that burdens one, follow the breath’s tranquil flow as well as clarifying awareness.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

Acknowledge the Conditions Arising causes and effects forward driven urgency. Mistaking problems and suffering, revealed is how an underlying self-delusion charges life. Feel the obsession and clinging to a self-notion. Note the subconscious provocations and the affect self has as a general dissatisfaction and restlessness. At every instance and with each experience, the whole self-consumed history is renewed and transferred. Insight for the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle turns one away from self-suffering.

Allow self-attachment to relax, clear and slowly disperse. It can be unnerving to move away from the dominating self-identification held so dearly. Follow the change in the breath's quality, physical presence calming and emerging mental clarity. A Middle Way appreciation separated from self extremes detaches from self-domination. Feel the general relief as self-deception weakens. Note how the self-absorbed monologue quiets down and attention settles. Acknowledge how dormant, active and transgressing habit expressions are temporarily subdued.

As an intensified Wise Reflection, recognize the causes and effects related to self-obsession. Misunderstanding, a misconstrued self-consciousness goes on to form. From these conditions, self-suffering persists. Following a Middle Way guidance of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, self-attachment is defused.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges the problems and suffering states related to the impulsive tendencies of a self actor; Sustained Contact notes the physical tension and mental states; Interest settles into the meditative moment detaching from problems and suffering; 'Joy' turns away from problems and suffering to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity penetrates Conditions Arising to discern life and reality as non-self and avert self-promoted actions.

Trying to fulfill my every self-obsessed whim, I'm needy, get upset and am confused. I make myself suffer. Now recognizing and understanding, I turn away from my self-fantasy to reality!

Life Practice

June 26—Stopping Suffering*

There are three moments when it is possible to halt the habitual progression from having future consequences.

The first is just as the habitual energy becomes active at the feeling stage of pleasant, painful, or neutral experiences. This is when the impulsive urge bubbles up from the past to become a 'feeling.' This is felt while meditating as wave after wave of motivated urgency spins through the mind. Following insight meditation, patience and understanding emerge. Wisely Reflecting, the chattering Monkey Mind is controlled.

The second opportunity deals with the habitual impulse before it reaches the 'commitment' stage as decision making. Noting the impulse to react, beneficial choices are made.

The third, last-ditch effort comes after the fact when the transgressing act has been performed. Though late, nevertheless, this moment as Wisely Reflected puts the brakes on the conflict. There may be a moment of embarrassment and some apologies needing to be made, but the unwise action is stopped from further harming one's self and others. This doesn't wipe the slate clean, but puts you in a position of honesty and clarity to do something positive.

Suffering comes from a misunderstanding and a lack of awareness. The past, present, and future overlap and connect through craving (desire, self-identity and as an escape). Conditions Arising as purposeful action, self-intent is compromising.

Followed is the Middle Way threefold experience: conduct-virtue to correct impulsive, one-sided habits; meditation-concentration as settling to see life without self-reference (impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature); and, finally as insight-wisdom realizing conditioned forged suffering. Control for thoughts, speech and actions are assumed. Like washing a soiled cloth, extra effort is required to clean the cluttered mind from self-impressions, narrow views, craving after, attachments and habitual impulses.

I'm more than a victim of my habits. I'm aware not to be dominated by them.

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June 27—Understanding Leading to Wisdom*

Why bother dealing with and trying to understanding Conditions Arising? To honestly realize how self-obsession plays out and stop from generating suffering actions. Happiness and peace are at stake. Knowing the contributing factors and how problems come about, you positively affect life and turn back the tide on problems and suffering.

Before one was dubious, wandered aimlessly and acted impulsively, but now Conditions Arising factors as well as non-self insight are realized. If understanding weren't possible then there would be no reason to practice Insight Meditation and follow the Middle Way. Problems do have a solution. Craving as the go between, carry over link stopped, suffering ends. Penetrating Conditions Arising, joy and fulfillment are possible. Problems have a solution (Detailed in July, the Four Noble Truths wisdom clarification sums up the Middle Way experience as nothing less than deliverance.). The self actor doesn't have to dominate and win out.

Meditating, Wise Reflection arises and in turn one realizes how habits dominate. Through renunciation and restraint control is applied for the senses (eyes, ears, nose, mouth, tactile and mind) and how one reacts impulsively to their stimulation. Wise Action is applied (goodwill, generosity, honesty, abstinence and sobriety).

Take any event and run the experience backwards (a difference of opinion at work or a childhood memory, etc.). Note how the episodes reveals the sequence of Conditions Arising as well as the non-self nature of multiple actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self. Everything points to misunderstanding life and reality and how compromising actions follow. Revealed is the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle.

While conditions, pressures, influences and elements carry over many life times (the transferring and renewing of dominating habits), all that you need understand and be aware of is how habitual energies affect the present moment. You can't change the past, only learn from it. Before taking a stand or making a decision to think, speak or act, acknowledge where motives are leading you. Wisely Reflecting, insight for life is distinguished.

Connect with intentions at the instance of 'commitment' (becoming) when about to engage in a thought, speak or action. Reflect where motives are taking you. Note craving's compelling urgency. Apply the Five Wise Actions rather than self-

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associated greed, hatred and confusion. Having, renunciation and restraint slows down the sensory barrage and charged reactions.

Apply the same mindful attention and recognition of formal meditation to all life situations. It takes a bit of time, practice and patience to reformat the self 'hard drive.' Proceed slowly. Be patient. Realize the mind/body obsessed turmoil. All too carelessly and impulsively one reacts. Exposed is how subconscious habits derail life. Now following deeper, discern Conditions Arising.

A Middle Way appreciation is followed away from self extremes to non-self insight. Wisely Reflecting, life and reality are realized as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. The Middle Way is directing you to wisdom-deliverance.

I'm more aware and insightful of my life, thoughts and actions. Being patient I don't go with my first impulse but better channel my motives.

June 28—Slowing Down*

Meditating, recognize how life plays out. In turn you are accountable for every moment—thought, spoken word and action. Following renunciation and restraint, feel how each sense contact is stimulated. Identify what you are doing and Wisely Reflect on the thoughts absorb you. Here you have insight for the subconscious and how you go on to crave. Previously you were a victim and ruled by habits and impulses but now realize how you were led astray by misunderstanding and a self-obsession. Connect with the Five Wise Actions realizing the underlying intentions absorbing one. Following a Middle Way appreciation, realize what it is like not to suffer.

Acknowledge how craving as desire, a self-identity or to escape, are engaged seeking to fulfill a self-illusion. Meditation connects as a Wise Reflection as a deeper recognition and overcoming doubts. Recognize how habits transfer over and compromise you. Learning from your experiences, discerned is the Conditions Arising cycle. You aren't doomed to suffer. As a personal understanding, Wise Reflection ends the suffering fall out.

Note how the subconscious has quieted and is subdued. Craving's urgency doesn't arise and the self actor isn't engaged. Acknowledge the release and relief from self-suffering. The Conditions Arising causes and effects suffering cycle are made defunct. There is more to life than living as an impulsive self actor. Followed is the Middle Way's conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, and insight-wisdom.

I turn away from being a self actor to have insight and wisdom for my life.

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June 29—Purposeful Action*

Conditions Arising follows the course of purposeful action. From misunderstanding and charged habits, compromising motives spill over. Greed, hatred and confusion dominate. Craving then arises to connect with past charged habits and leads to suffering.

Engaged in Insight Meditation, life is understood. Now Wisely Reflecting, discern the complex self-related turmoil affecting life. The flashing habitual urgency noted, follow how the subconscious dialogue plays out as a Monkey Mind carelessness. The self actor goes on to choose the most gratifying and least line of resistance.

Settled and centered, realize the Middle Way from self extremes. Allow the self-associated habitual tension affecting both the body and mind to relax and disperse. Identifying the moment, note the breath's quality and mental states to detach from self-identification. Discern the purposeful action affecting life as a self actor. Wisely Reflecting and following a Middle Way appreciation, renunciation and restraint settle the Monkey Mind, then connect with Wise Action to control life.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact connects with the breath's quality and mental state; Sustained Contact recognizes how motives form as intentions and direct acts; Interest notes the self actor charge; 'Joy' turns away from life-actions to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity penetrates Conditions Arising to discern life and reality as non-self and averts self-promoted actions.

My life doesn't happen on a whim but I make it happen. I allow the self actor to be. Here I better recognize and have insight for my life.

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June 30—Stopping*

Realizing the compelling antics and charge of the self actor, one has insight and discerns Conditions Arising. Not understanding or ignorant, causes and effects carry over as family and peer pressures, culturally and traditionally affected as well as being unaware. The Middle Way appreciation from self extremes is followed. Brought to cessation are the whole causes and effects fallout. Self antics can be stopped anytime when wisely connected.

As your own therapist of sorts (who after all knows you better), Wisely Reflect on every thought, speech and action. Thoughtful and maturing, realize the habitual craving and Conditions Arising pattern. Misunderstanding life thought formations arise, a consciousness formed, a body/mind identification came to be, sense contacts were engaged, sense impressions experienced, feelings were generated, a craving after urgency came to be, attachment, commitment, and life-actions went on to be engaged, and suffering played out.

But just as causes and effects brought you to suffer, so does meditation and the Middle Way stop suffering. Wisely Reflecting, insight for the self-perpetuated hoax is discerned. The Middle Way offering is detailed in August, but here connecting with and following a Middle Way appreciation you detach from self-inspired intentions to have renunciation for desire, goodwill for hatred, and compassion for ill will. Following renunciation and restraint, one isn't carelessly or impulsively inclined to crave or engage in transgressing actions. Meditation's reward is the wisdom not to suffer.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact as awareness for the breath's quality and mental states; Sustained Contact recognizes the motives driving the self actor; Interest goes on to calm and stop the self urgency; 'Joy' turns away from habitual tendencies to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity penetrates Conditions Arising to discern life and reality as non-self and averts self-promoted actions.

Realize the joy from dropping self-attachments and undermining habits. Insight Meditation, the Middle Way appreciation, and Wise Reflection are a profound recognition for the nature of suffering as self-related as well as suffering's end.

Careless actions bring me to suffering while Wise Actions are to my benefit.

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**JULY—
The Four Noble Truths,
The Wisdom Penetrating Self and the End of Self Suffering**



Through Insight Meditation awareness as Wise Reflection for life is applied as a Middle Way appreciation of conduct-virtue (controlling acted on transgressing habits), meditation-concentration (controlling actively arisen habits), insight-wisdom (eradicating dormant habits). Realized are the three characteristics of impermanence, dissatisfaction and suffering, and a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action.

The Four Noble Truths vision and wisdom now focuses specifically on life's ongoing challenge—self-suffering. All other insights, practices and faiths fail to correctly address and answer the self-dilemma. Cutting through all mundane distractions and misleading inquiries, the Four Truths are a profound and dynamic personal insight, leading to suffering's end. The whole of Insight Meditation and the Middle Way experience (The Middle Way is the Fourth Truth followed as deliverance from suffering.) has prepared one for the wisdom breakthrough that is the Four Noble Truths. Just as car keys aren't handed over to a child or a beginning violin student wouldn't be placed in the symphony, to have jumped head long into the Four Noble Truths would have been premature because a dominating self-delusion would have won out and made it impossible to realize the all-encompassing aspects and the Truths profound revelations.

Elevated from worldly attachments and pursuits to insight and wisdom, the Truths are 'noble' because of their profound relevance revealing the true nature of life and reality and lead to liberation. Also, only a 'noble,' clear-minded and virtuous person, has the capacity to understand the Truths. As a practical transcendence from self-attachments and the one-sided charade, the Four Noble Truths reveal how penetrating problems and suffering actually holds the answer!

Suffering is best understood as being stressed, having problems, bothered, dissatisfied, inconvenienced, challenged or conflicted—a self-fixation at the center of the dilemma. While the role of self-suffering can be difficult to accept and look at one's less than perfect ways, life is honestly viewed. This isn't a hopeless or doomed experience, but a realistic connection with life. It isn't until the profound threefold penetration within each Truth (as awareness, understanding and deliverance) is known that one won't be free of self-dominating. Not a philosophical wrangling or intellectual endeavor but a true release and personal insight, the Four Truths are applied like a raft to crossover from the self-defined near shore to navigate to the further shore and liberation, Nirvana. The 'raft' that is the Truths serves the purpose and function to transcend suffering. The Truths are also likened to a medical diagnosis as they rightly define the malady and are the cure for self-suffering.

Underneath the impulsiveness and indulgence is an out of control, endless craving as a delight and pleased pursuit that approaches a frenzied panic. Distracted and unfulfilled, one is unsettled, on edge and confused. There is an incompleteness, longing and misery as self infiltrates and dominates thoughts, speech and actions. Dissatisfaction and disappointment already a part of life, the inherent friction and upset leaves you struggling and at odds as a search for quick-fixed solutions. But Insight Meditation, Wise Reflection and the Middle Way appreciation are a personal understanding of life

As a 'noble,' clear-minded and virtuous person, the Four Noble Truths Wisdom-Liberating offering are discerned. A once conflicted and problematic life is understood and a profound peace penetrated. The Truths are all encompassing and beyond the conventions of time, culture, history or self-defined limitations. All of life and reality are summed up and concisely brought together, climaxing in nothing less than liberation. The Truths as practical, accessible and are the only salvation for ending suffering. If there weren't deliverance, then Insight Meditation and the Middle Way would be a fruitless experience of so many empty words. What stands out is that self and suffering are synonymous.

The Four Noble Truths—

5. Impermanence and dissatisfaction are part of life. Having no unique or individual character, specifically misunderstanding the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention) is suffering. **The recognition is a Signless Deliverance.**
6. Played out through the Conditions Arising cycle, craving as delight and pleasure is the link to continued suffering. **The recognition is a Desireless Deliverance.**

7. Craving's cessation is the end of suffering leading to Nirvana, the Unconditioned Realm. **The recognition is an Emptiness Deliverance.**
8. The way to realizing craving's cessation is through the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path guidance and experience, the Wisdom-Liberating breakthrough to Nirvana and the end of self-suffering. **The recognition is the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.**

The Four Noble Truths offer a unique vision—a recognition of the present, how conditions arise, conditions ceasing, and the way to cessation. The First and Second Truths reflect the true nature of life and reality as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature (the many actions joining to give the illusion of the 'one' or self), and also how self-willed actions go on to spiral out of control through craving and have suffering consequences.

The Third and Fourth Truths triumphantly share the wisdom experience bringing self-suffering to an end. Through knowing, applying and experiencing the Four Noble Truths, one moves from self-delusion to Stream Entry passage bound for final Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

July 1—Problems as Answers*

**“Those who discern suffering,
 its cause,
 and where it totally stops,
 without trace,
 who discern the path,
 the way to the stilling of suffering:
 consummate
 in their awareness-release
 and discernment-release,
 capable
 of making an end,
 they are not headed
 to birth and aging.” IT 103**

Before Insight Meditation’s stability and recognition life was challenging—an exhausting self-pursued runaround. Gradually, moving away from self-centered extremes to a Middle Way appreciation, a present awareness and Wise Reflection penetrate life’s ordeal. Meditating and aware, having patience and goodwill as well as being responsible, what was once frustrating and uncertain, you are now tranquil, discerning and insightful. The Four Noble Truths recognition realizes suffering’s end.

Problems and suffering exist on three levels revealing a self-centered theme. First, the everyday problems and difficulties everyone experiences, feels and shares in common such as the physical pains and discomforts, the day-to-day inconveniences and travails gone through and put up with as well as Murphy’s Law annoyance of things just not going right.

Second, there exists the suffering and problems brought about by change or the short-term nature of all experiences. No matter how gratifying, life is impermanent. The good time had on a vacation comes to an end; possessions are broken, lost or stolen; friends or loved pass on and relationships end. Reflecting a general dissatisfaction, change is part of everything.

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And third, is the more pervasive suffering brought on by the habitual domination as a self actor as well as the body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Luxury, convenience, good times, ever pursuing and involved, the end result is disappointment and varying degrees of suffering. Encouraged to indulge and satisfy desires, when inconvenienced or disappointed anger arises as well as doubt, worry and confusion. Underneath the turmoil is an out-of-control, endless craving keeping one restless. Conditions Arising reflects the compelling cycle with craving the go-between link joining past and future actions. A self-obsession obscures and taints life and reality.

Characterized by simplicity and candor, the Four Noble Truths convey both the realization of self-suffering as well as the Wisdom-Liberation to the Ultimate Reality that is Nirvana and suffering's end. Normally, the truth is taken to be a statement of fact or to be a logically formed answer as in a test or math problem. But the Truth here has nothing to do with intellectual understanding or impractical notions but rather goes to the heart of the matter—a Middle Way appreciation and clarity as personal insight ending one's own self-dominated suffering.

Through Insight Meditation, center on the breath's quality to Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. A body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification, manifest in subtle and not so subtly a general suffering. The body emanates tension and pain (face drawn, jaw locked, shoulders hunched, stomach and pelvic pressure), then there is the psychological unsettling and frenzy of flashing thoughts and mental disturbances. Acknowledge the actual stress and gripped burden that is self-associated suffering.

A deluge of unsettling habits, note the restlessness of a distracted mental monologue. Begin to slowly feel the shift and move away from a self-obsessed domination. Note how the body relaxes through meditative awareness and the mind settles to an open-flowing consciousness. You have patiently, compassionately and wisely prepared yourself to discern the vision and significance of the Four Noble Truths.

But what has kept you from knowing the Truths and freeing yourself—self-dominated greed, hatred and confusion. In other words a self-perceived and absorbed nature is the stumbling block. Like viewing the emperor without clothes on, there can be an initial discomfort when facing one's weaknesses. Therapists mention spending weeks, months and even years in getting their patients to where he or she can honestly admit and look at themselves without fear or resentment. You may flinch to view this exposed picture, but are now more than ready. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation have been a preparation for the Four Noble Truths. The Four Truths require a complete honesty to once and for all entirely drop self-impulsiveness. The self-charade ends through craving's cessation.

Feel the toll of upset, conflict and stress that self-suffering brings and how conditions as causes and effects play out. The Noble Truths emphasize self-promoted problems. Acknowledge the Middle Way's role through conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, and insight-wisdom. Breaking away from careless self-associations, a non-self insight and freedom are experienced. As a Wise Reflection, the Five Groups arise and fade as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements. There is no unique, self-source or identity.

Following a Middle Way recognition not identifying, delighting in or pursuing any past, present or future self-association, one isn't measured or defined by the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Follow as the self-charged compulsion disperses. Realized is non-self insight and the release from self-reference.

I see myself now all too clearly. I actually harm myself as a self actor. Enough is enough. I'm ready to face the self-culprit and deal with my one-sided habits.

July 2—The First Noble Truth as Awareness for Self-Suffering*

“The Noble Truth of Suffering is this: birth is suffering, aging is suffering, sickness is suffering, death is suffering, association with the unpleasant is suffering, dissociation from the pleasant is suffering, not to receive what one desires is suffering—in brief the five aggregates [as self-identity] subject to grasping are suffering.” SN 56, 11

Looking at humanity’s troubled history, you wonder why things rarely get better. Despite the modern wealth of technology, support and access making things easier for more people than at any other time in history, suffering remains. Ultimately, are you truly happy? How do you cope, bring compassion, have understanding and deal with your problems and upset? Believe it or not, as strange as it might seem, suffering is a salvation. How good to learn from one’s missteps and unguarded moments. There is hope, joy and, finally, understanding. There is wisdom.

Each person carries and is overwhelmed by his or her own ‘personal bag’ of problems and suffering. Recognizing how you contribute and add to the burdensome sack of woe, what is thoughts of as happiness, in fact, brings greater pain and sadness through self-attachments. Problems and suffering must first be understood. A deeper fulfillment, equanimity and wisdom for life are known—problems as answers.

Like a physician diagnosing an illness and prescribing a proper treatment, the Four Noble Truths bring an end to the torment and pain: awareness for suffering; understanding the causes and reasons for the problems; and, finally, the wisdom deliverance to cure and bring an end to suffering. A practical insight, the Noble Truths threefold intuition is the prescription to keep in mind.

Through the First Truth, all suffering is traced to a misunderstanding (an ignorance or not knowing) of life and reality. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention) are a mistaken and careless clinging. A false sense of security and attempted control to deal with a constantly changing world, the body/mind association is taken to be self.

Highlighting the reason for suffering, the First Truth is an open communication with problematic, self-absorbed ways. Habits, personality, one-sided thoughts and self-

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centered actions, the First Noble Truth is a turning point awareness for realizing self-based suffering. Underscoring impermanence's role and general dissatisfaction, the Five Remembrances mirroring life's unsettling nature cannot be denied (sickness, aging, death, loss and the role of motivated intent). Reflecting various levels of suffering, birth, aging, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair are all tied to a self-illusion. As a penetrating insight, the First Truth is a Wise Reflect on the self extremes of indulgence and gratification as well as for hostility and aggression. An honest admission, everything thought, said and done is to justify and uphold a self-image.

Acknowledge the stressed attachment you have as a self actor as well as how impermanence and dissatisfaction are troubling. The pleasure and comfort achieved keeps one in a frantic pursuit. Unfortunately, the end result is to be let down. The body sickens, ages and dies. There is personal loss. This doesn't mean the carpe diem to live life to the fullest is followed because this would only lead to more sorrow. Worldly pursuits are a distraction, upset and disappointment.

Settled and centered on the breath's quality, body, feelings, mind and life-actions, the First Noble Truth awareness recognizes the beguiling self actor. Body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are 'signless' or without any core or true individual characteristic, but rather are so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements; a body/mind association of multiple actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self.

Gently guide your awareness. The body is a shell and frame housing the self actor guise. Note the breath's quality as rigid and absorbed, mistaking the body to be self while the mind is gripped in deceived stress. Feel how the face is drawn, back tense, and abdominal muscles clench in self-fixation. Feel the burden that is the body. Through a Signless or non-self awareness of the Four Noble Truths, the body isn't taken to be self.

Feelings are engaged through sense contacts (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin and mind). Sense impressions are experienced as either pleasant, painful or neutral. Note how pleasant moments are clung to as a self-pleasure, painful experiences are avoided as a self-hatred, and self-neglect as boredom for neutral moments. Acknowledge the burden that is feelings. Through a Signless or non-self awareness of the Four Noble Truths, feelings aren't taken to be self.

Perception is identifying, labeling and judging from a careless self point-of-view. Sense how the breath constricts and the body stiffens while the mind narrows through as perception. Feel the burden that is self-bias. Through a Signless or non-self awareness of the Four Noble Truths, perception isn't taken to be self.

Mental reactions form from many personal experiences and project a self-illusion. Closer to film frames spliced together, note the attraction as well as clinging to these self episodes. The result is suffering. Feel the burden that is mental reactions. Through a Signless or non-self awareness of the Four Noble Truths, mental reactions aren't taken to be self.

Conscious attention is engaged and experienced as life-action phenomena in general, a recognition arising for every contacted action moment. There is conscious attention for each of the six senses, but also the consciousness mistaking life as self in general rather than arising from purposeful action as conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Self-reference and self-promotion is suffering. Feel the burden that is conscious attention. Through a Signless or non-self awareness of the Four Noble Truths, conscious attention isn't taken to be self.

Acknowledge how the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are a deception. Feel the attraction, clinging and pursuit for self-illusion. Note how misperception affects your whole being and is unsettling, is dissatisfying and leads to suffering. Through a Signless or non-self awareness of the Four Noble Truths, no real self-identity is discerned.

Acknowledge the buildup of self-accumulated habits. Worldly pursuits play out as a self-charade. Through the awareness for the First Noble Truth the Signless or non-self nature that is life stands out. Wisely Reflecting, slowly the fixation for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification disperses.

I've been fooled as a self actor. This is all I've known. I was deceived. The Truths honestly expose my self-dilemma. I've misunderstood life.

July 3—The First Noble Truth as Understanding Self Suffering*

“[Self] Suffering, as an noble truth, is this:’ Such was the vision, the knowledge, the understanding, the finding, the illumination, that arose in regard to ideas not heard by me before. ‘This suffering, as an noble truth, can be diagnosed:’ such was the vision, the knowledge, the understanding, the finding, the illumination, that arose in regard to ideas not heard by me before. ‘This suffering, as an noble truth, has been diagnosed:’ such was the vision, the knowledge, the understanding, the finding, the illumination, that arose in regard to ideas not heard by me before.” SN 56, 11

Awareness for the First Noble Truth, understanding is on two levels—the role of the self actor through the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification as well as the Signless non-self nature of all things. The Five Groups are considered to be like foam (body), bubbles (feelings), a mirage (perception), plantain tree (mental reactions), and a magic trick (conscious attention)—not self but Signless or without any true self-definition.

The First Noble Truth reveals misunderstanding’s role has on self-suffering. Played out on the worldly stage, the self actor charade is a suffering. The self-crown is one of many thorns. Signless, without any core or individual characteristic, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are understood as a Wisely Reflected insight—the body isn’t self, feelings aren’t self, perception isn’t self, mental reactions aren’t self and conscious attention aren’t self.

The noble awareness discerns the Five Groups self-illusion. Feel how you desperately cling to a self-notion through your misunderstanding; life and reality are impermanent, dissatisfying, and of a non-self nature. Follow the insight to the relationship between careless, impulsive actions and the Noble Truth understanding clarification as Signless. An I, me, mine attitude, makes life a struggle. The Four Noble Truths wisdom recognition is a meaningful and profound penetration into the self-hoax. Sense the attachment as pressures and struggles surrounding the Five Groups. Slowly the self-notion weakens as insight for non-self and a Signless recognition stands out. The Noble Truths are a wisdom realization for life.

Appreciate the freedom from self-awareness that is the Signless understanding of the First Noble Truth. Follow the slow release from attachment for the Five Groups.

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Note how self-related deception recedes and relief is experienced. Acknowledge the breath's quality relaxing, attention clearing, and clinging pressure as well as conceit and restlessness dropping away. The emperor without clothes, the self actor is revealed and understood—insubstantial, as non-self and Signless.

Wise Reflection brings you to understand the First Noble Truth as a distinguishing insight for self-suffering.

I realize through my self-obsession. Self is like waving a flag or carrying a sign—an all-consuming I, me, mine. What a nerve-racking, exhausting nonsense I put myself through. Behind the grand illusion there is no true self.

July 4—The First Noble Truth Wisdom as Signless Deliverance*

“And what are the five clinging-aggregates that, in short, are suffering? The clinging-aggregate of form, the clinging-aggregate of feeling, the clinging-aggregate of perception, the clinging-aggregate of fabrications, the clinging-aggregate of consciousness: These are called the five clinging-aggregates that, in short, are suffering.” MN 141

The First Noble Truth is rightly understood as selfless insight into life and reality.

The First Truth is about self-suffering and that problems have answers. Settling through Insight Meditation follows as a grounded Wise Reflection discerns the Signless Deliverance for the body/mind that is the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Follow as the Noble Truth recognition directs one away from self-consumed to seeing through conceit and restlessness to a Signless penetration or non-self insight having no unique self-characteristic.

A misunderstood, self-deception is at the center of suffering. Confused, exhausting and painful, self is unsettling. Through the First Noble Truth is the awareness for self-deceived pressures: within the body, for contacted feelings, as a misguided perception, disturbed mental reactions, and a confusing conscious attention.

Discern the Signless Deliverance. Impermanent, the body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention arise and fade as so many conditions, influences, pressures and elements. Feel the shift from a self-hoax to the non-self Signless insight that is the First Noble Truth realization. As long as self-attachment remains, there is suffering. Follow the release and dispersing of habitual charged tendencies.

Self only knows greed, hatred and confusion, is careless, indulgent and craves, all played out through the Conditions Arising purposeful action cycle. Wisely Reflecting, the subconscious monologue abates and a discerning recognition stands out.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact is awareness of the body/mind self burden; Sustained Contact slowly relaxes to detach from the Five Groups; Interest acknowledges the shift from self-absorbed to Signless tranquility; ‘Joy’ settles as an insightful non-self Signless awareness; and having One-Pointed Clarity

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is the awareness, understanding and Wise Reflection of the First Noble Truth—the Five Groups as insubstantial and without any self nature.

Wisely Reflecting, feel how recognition expands as personal insight to a Signless wisdom recognition. Beyond the body/mind association, beyond self-impressions and feelings, the Signless Deliverance insight undercuts the obsessed craving for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification.

Follow as awareness gives way to knowing, knowing then gives way to insight and a clarifying recognition. The noble insight displaces self-delusion, directing one to a Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

Here I've come to penetrate self. The joke has been on me and how I've been duped as a self actor. There is more to life than self and suffering.

July 5—The Second Noble Truth as the Awareness for Craving’s Role*

“The Noble Truth of the Origin [cause] of Suffering is this: It is this craving which produces re-becoming [rebirth or transferring of karma energy] accompanied by passionate greed, and finding fresh delight now here and now there, namely craving for sense pleasure, craving for existence and craving for non-existence [self-annihilation].” SN 56, 11

The Second Noble Truth reveals that while misunderstanding or ignorance is at the center of suffering, craving after is the link to continued suffering. A Pandora’s Box potential, an instant before feeling was contacted as a sense-impression, the self actor was a faint whisper. Now self intensifies to a deafening roar as past habits flare-up to merge with craving to be acted on and the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle played out. Penetrating the Second Noble Truth is a Desireless Deliverance.

Craving as a delight and pleasure is three-sided: the desire for sense gratification creates a frenzy of needing; the yearning to seek and hold onto life as a self-identification; and the folly of the cynic and skeptic seeking to escape from life’s challenges (a disguised grappling with a self-notion to wipe out anything to do with self). These aren’t separate forms of craving but different aspects of it. Reflected in the breath’s quality as stifling tension, experience craving’s intense unsettling. Craving is dissatisfying, a wandering and culminates in suffering. Craving unites subconscious motives to then carry over as future self-promoted actions.

Settled and centered, gently begin to relax craving’s hold as delight and pleasure. Sense how self-identification is overwhelming as both a physical tension and mental stress for a body/mind identification. A delight and pleasure for, relax craving’s urgency and domination to pursue and become. Note the relief from craving’s impulsive pursuit. Carelessness and confusion clear to penetrate the Noble Truth experience for how habits link together with craving to then transfer over and engage in suffering acts.

Craving has me on edge, seeking constant gratification. I feel craving’s power as past habits join to carry over to continued suffering.

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July 6—The Second Noble Truth as Understanding Craving’s Role*

“This is the Noble Truth of the Origin [cause] of Suffering’: such was the vision, the knowledge, the wisdom, the science, the light that arose in me concerning things not heard before. ‘This Origin of Suffering [self craving] as an noble truth should be eradicated’: such was the vision, the knowledge, the wisdom, the science, the light that arose in me concerning things not heard before. ‘This Origin of suffering [self craving] as an noble truth has been eradicated’: such was the vision, the knowledge, the wisdom, the science, the light that arose in me concerning things not heard before.” SN 56, 11

As part of the Conditions Arising cycle, craving continues an obsession with the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Craving is deceiving because it is a thrilling pursuit, but culminates in suffering. Acknowledge craving’s pressures as a strained breathing, forehead and eye pressure as well as the tightening of abdominal muscles while the mind is tense and narrows. The Second Noble Truth understanding craving’s role is a Desireless Deliverance.

Settled and centered, body relaxed and attention clear, note the charge and compulsion for doing and acting out that drives craving. Acknowledge the restlessness as craving keeps one agitated and stressed—as desired temptation, as self-identity, and to escape. Beneath the frenzy of impulsive motives to act and react, the Second Noble Truth’s understanding discerns craving’s potential. Like a teapot about to boil, feel how craving’s is unnerving. Note the ongoing chattering mental monologue. Follow how subconscious motivated intent flashes and breaks through as a present delight and pleased pursuit. Self demands are strong, revealing the underlying effect or dormant, active and transgressing habits. Craving arises from sense-contacted impressions to then carry over as suffering consequences.

Here is a breakthrough insight and connection for Conditions Arising and how subconscious motivated intentions play out. As a body/mind obsession, one is conditioned by self-delusion—craving for desire, for self-identity, or to escape.

Allow craving’s urgency to relax and the habitual buildup to disperse. Acknowledge what it is like to not follow and jump headlong into craved suffering. Grounded as a present experience, you now have the understanding for the Second Noble Truth

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Desireless Deliverance for craving's demanding role. Seeing through craving's unsettling, not everything desired and craved for is of benefit.

Wisely Reflecting, a Middle Way appreciation experience as personal recognition for the Desireless Deliverance from craving is known.

Craving compels me on as a self actor. I see into the Second Noble Truth and craving's role for how I continue suffering. What a breakthrough!

July 7—The Second Noble Truth Wisdom as Desireless Deliverance*

“The craving that makes for further becoming — accompanied by passion and delight, relishing now here and now there — i.e., craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, craving for non-becoming. This is called the noble truth of the origination of stress.” MN 141

The Second Noble Truth is rightly understood and penetrated as a Desireless insight for craving’s role in suffering.

Craving as the go-between link for habitual expressions, leads to continued upset and problems—to suffering. Only by understanding, experiencing and penetrating craving’s significance does suffering end. As a subliminal flashing intent, craving as a delight and pleasure for sense-contacted experiences is revealed. Craving continues the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle. Understanding craving’s role is a Desireless Deliverance.

Aware of the prattling voice echoing inside the head and where it wants to lead you, feel the ongoing physical stress as well as underlying mental pressures. Engaged through sense reactions, craving sparks and joins with intentions. Craving as desire, for self-identity and to escape is a seduction, which unfortunately ends in suffering. A Desireless insight for the Second Noble Truth recognizes craving’s far reaching effects. Relaxing facial tension, physical pressures as well as disturbed distractions for delight and pleasure, acknowledge craving’s power directed to compromising actions. Allowing the habitual buildup to slowly disperse, the Desireless Deliverance is experienced. Don’t be a push over for self-provoked careless habit energies, but firmly say ‘no.’

Awareness Penetration as Insight: Initial Contact acknowledges how subconscious habits provoke craving as delight and pleasure; Sustained Contact feels how craving’s urgency intensifies; Interest as an attention forms around craved habitual intentions; ‘Joy’ directs the attention away from self-absorbed craving; and having One-Pointed Clarity is an awareness, understanding and Wise Reflection distinguishing the Second Noble Truth for craving’s role leading to suffering.

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Wisely Reflecting, feel how recognition expands as personal insight to a Desireless wisdom recognition. The Desireless Deliverance insight undercuts the obsessed craving for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification.

Follow as awareness gives way to knowing, knowing then gives way to non-self insight, and a clarifying recognition. The Noble Truth insight displaces craving, directing one to Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

Craving makes me impulsive and desiring. Suffering follows. I understand how my habits lead me on. I can put the brakes on and stop my self-suffering.

July 8—The Third Noble Truth as the Awareness of Craving’s Cessation*

“The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering is this: It is the complete cessation of that very craving, giving it up, relinquishing it, liberating oneself from it, and detaching oneself from it.” SN 56, 11

The Third Truth leaves no doubt that the Four Noble Truths are a personal and realized fulfillment and liberation. If there weren’t deliverance and an end to suffering, the Truths would be so many useless and hollow words. It is precisely because the Truths do lead to awareness, understanding and wisdom that liberation and suffering’s end is possible—craving’s cessation. There is more to life than the self extremes for indulgence and hostility. Through craving’s cessation you go from being a victim of misunderstanding to a ‘noble’ clarification, Middle Way guidance and the Ultimate Reality; Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends. Paradoxically, problems are a salvation. No easy task, only through a breakthrough wisdom, can the self-suffering madness end. An Emptiness Deliverance is penetrated—non-self insight and cessation from self-directed actions.

Wisely Reflecting, the Five Wise Actions engaged (goodwill, generosity, honesty, abstinence and sobriety), along with renunciation and restraint, focusing the Monkey Mind, stopping and preventing the Three Poisons (greed, hatred and confusion), the Third Noble Truth’s role is complete cessation of self-expressed craving. The whole of Insight Meditation is about having the awareness and intelligence to curb self-promoted habits, have insight for the true nature of life and reality, and to be free of suffering. The Four Noble Truths are a unique experience and realization—a clarification of life, how conditions arise, how conditions cease, and the Middle Way followed to cessation. Realizing the Emptiness Deliverance is to know life’s non-self nature, penetrate the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle, and realize the many actions in the ‘one’ or self. You don’t hold on to something that is harmful. Craving brought to cessation, an Emptiness Deliverance is penetrated.

Acknowledge the compelling characteristics for delight and pleasure. An insatiable pursuit, craving as desire is exhausting and unsettling; craving for life seeks to fulfill a self-identity; and as a gross misunderstanding, craving to escape and, ironically, be free of a self which really doesn’t exist. The Third Noble Truth as Emptiness Deliverance, disarms the Conditions Arising cycle making it defunct. With craving

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eliminated, joy, relief, happiness and peace are experienced. Just as a magnifying glass focuses and intensifies light, the Third Noble Truth turns Wise Reflection to recognize craving's ending.

Feel the emptying release from cessation as self-accumulated habits disperses. With craving's urgency weakened, the self-attached delusion wanes. There is a non-self recognition and release in the wake of craving's cessation. Karmic actions can't be reversed, but either play out to suffering or are halted through penetrating the Noble Truths. Ending the Conditions Arising cycle, the Emptiness Deliverance as cessation under cuts craving's power to carry over and manifest as future actions and consequences.

As self-intentions subside, sense the tranquility and accompanying insight that is the emptiness recognition for cessation and non-self freedom. A deepening confidence and certainty, the strong urges to act and react through self-promotion is halted. Acknowledge the quiet joy, relief and equanimity related to craving's cessation. Feel how the body/mind restlessness and the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are dropped. Craving is defused and cessation affected (cut off is desire, self-identification, and the need to escape from self). Follow the spaciousness as detachment from self to an Emptiness Deliverance recognition; craving's cessation to a selfless liberation.

Craving is the itch that never stops itching. I'm always keyed up and restlessly look for what's next. Bringing craving under control, I understand what drives me as a self actor.

July 9—The Third Noble Truth Understanding the Cessation of Craving*

“This is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering’: such was the vision, the knowledge, the wisdom, the science, the light that arose in me concerning things not heard before. ‘This Cessation of suffering, as an noble truth, should be realized’: such was the vision, the knowledge, the wisdom, the science, the light that arose in me concerning things not heard before. ‘This Cessation of suffering, as an noble truth has been realized’: such was the vision, the knowledge, the wisdom, the science, the light that arose in me concerning things not heard before.” SN 56, 11

Stop craving and the Conditions Arising suffering cycle stops. It sounds simple and it is, but a self-obsession undermines one. Something to continually remind yourself is to not suffer—not to be a habitually dominated person. The Third Truth reveals that craving’s cessation is necessary to end suffering. Feel how underlying habits spark craving and craving then continues to suffering. Stopping craving’s delight and pleasure, the Third Noble Truth insight as Emptiness Deliverance is discerned.

While misunderstanding life and reality forms a self-delusion, craving is the link by which the self-charade continues. For example, diving into deep water or climbing at higher altitudes, pressure and weakness is experienced. Craving’s affect is similar as fatiguing and unsettling as well as mental pressure and distraction. Non-self isn’t another version of self to cling and suffer through, but rather a release, freeing and cessation from the whole Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle.

With understanding craving’s role and forward driven urgency, comes release from subconscious greed, hatred and confusing habits. Not only are motives as karma halted but craving as future consequences are stopped. Eliminate craving’s urgency as delight and pleasure and self-suffering comes to an abrupt end. Compelling habits are disengaged. The Third Noble Truth penetrates the Emptiness Deliverance and release from self-reference and promotion. Misunderstanding for the Five Groups as Self-Identification ceases and a non-self clarification is realized.

Wisely Reflecting, the Third Noble Truth understanding is a distinguishing insight for craving’s cessation.

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Needing, wanting, fleeing and confused—craving keeps me on an endless runaround. No wonder I'm exhausted and lost. But knowing how my habits drive me on to crave, I can bring a stop to suffering.

July 10—The Third Noble Truth Wisdom as Emptiness Deliverance*

“The remainderless fading and cessation, renunciation, relinquishment, release, and letting go of that very craving. This is called the noble truth of the cessation of stress.” MN 141

The Third Noble Truth is rightly understood and penetrated as a personal experience and intuition as Emptiness Deliverance for craving’s cessation in ending self-suffering.

When disturbed, stressed or frustrated it is because a self-attached ideal and expectations have one craving. But releasing the self-notion, craving as delight and pleasure ceases. Required is commonsense, will-power, renunciation and restraint, Wise Reflection, Wise Action and a penetrating wisdom. The pitfalls and distractions for craving are realized. The Middle Way appreciation is a presently connected awareness and understanding for self extremes as indulging and hostile. As an Emptiness Deliverance, cessation halts self-associated actions and exorcises craving. Required is a keen personal discernment to stop self-inflicted wounds.

Centered and settled, allow the habitual buildup to empty. Craving’s cessation stops karma’s renewal from transferring over. Aware of the three-sided urgency that is craving for desire, for self-identity and to escape, subliminal intentions spring up to ignite craving. The body/mind burden for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification is overpowering. Craving as a go-between link carries over to continue suffering. Acknowledge how the Conditions Arising causes and effects wanes and craving is halted.

Redirected from the worldly pursuits through a commitment of Wise Reflection, renunciation and restraint, and Wise Action, craving’s cessation as an Emptiness Deliverance experience wisdom. A non-self clarification, self-suffering is penetrated. Feel the actual release of physical tension as well as the settling of underlying motives and mental monologue. There is no blind faith here, but experience how intentions carry over through craving to compromise life. Wisely Reflecting, a calm abiding discerns the Third Noble Truth Emptiness Deliverance for craving’s cessation.

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Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact connects with craving's compulsion as delight and pleasure; Sustained Contact notes craving's urgency merging with flashing habitual intentions; Interest follows craving forming as a response; 'Joy' directs the attention as a Wise Reflection away from self-absorbed craving; and having One-Pointed Clarity is awareness, understanding and distinguishing the Third Noble Truth for craving's cessation and the Conditions Arising suffering cycle ending.

Wise Reflecting, feel how recognition expands as a personal insight to an Emptiness Deliverance recognition. The Emptiness Deliverance as insight undercuts craving's power.

Follow as awareness gives way to knowing, knowing gives way to non-self insight, the Third Noble Truth is a clarifying recognition. Your noble insight displaces self-delusion, directing one to Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. Nirvana without self-suffering is glimpsed.

Suffering goes on as long as I want it to—as long as I crave. I realize the Noble Truth insight.

July 11—The Fourth Noble Truth as Awareness of the Middle Way Path to be followed to Wisdom-Liberation*

“The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering is this: It is the Noble Eightfold Path, and nothing else, namely: right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.” SN 56, 11

Straight forward and personal, the whole of one’s Insight Meditation experience joins triumphantly in the Fourth Noble Truth clarification—the Middle Way Path ending self-delusion. The threefold emphasis (conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, and insight-wisdom) directs one from self extremes for indulgence and hostility to Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. Heralding fulfillment, peace and liberation, the Fourth Noble Truth is an Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

The Fourth Truth shares the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path offering as liberating deliverance: **Insight–Wisdom** as Wise Understanding and Wise Intention; **Conduct-Virtue** as Wise Speech, Wise Action and Wise Livelihood; **Concentration-Meditation** as Wise Effort, Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration. Covering every aspect of life (the intellectual, the ethical, and the psychological), the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is the prescribed course of treatment for dealing with the self actor torment. Undoing the layers of underlying dormant, active and transgressing habits, craving as delight and pleasure is brought to complete cessation. Perversely, there is an attitude that suffering proves just how strong one is or as something to surpass. But this accomplishes nothing and has no true appreciation for life. There would always be more suffering to come around the corner. There isn’t much of a future without personal clarification of the Noble Truths as wisdom.

Settled and centered, reflect on how you first began meditating to now realizing an intuitive Wisdom-Liberation. Body relaxed, attention focused, follow how the habitual buildup disperses. Equanimity stands out. Attention is directed as a distinguishing insight. Like cleaning a soot-covered window, an intensified Wise Reflection penetrates the misunderstanding and ignorance had for life. It isn’t enough to know that one is suffering, but following the threefold Middle Way guidance karmic ties are cut off and the self folly done with. Confident, certain and realized, suffering’s end is penetrated and the breakthrough to Nirvana know.

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A journey of discovery and realization, the reward is my suffering ending. The Middle Way is guiding me to Liberation.

July 12—The Fourth Noble Truth Understanding for the Middle Way Path to Wisdom-Liberation*

“This is the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the cessation of suffering’: such was the vision, the knowledge, the wisdom, the science, the light that arose in me concerning things not heard before. ‘This Path leading to the cessation of suffering, as a noble truth, should be developed’: such was the vision, the knowledge, the wisdom, the science, the light that arose in me concerning things not heard before. ‘This Path leading to the cessation of suffering, as a noble truth has been developed’: such was the vision, the knowledge, the wisdom, the science, the light that arose in me concerning things not heard before.” SN 56, 11

If it weren't for suffering's fallout, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification would be a slapstick-like amusing comedy. The Threefold Middle Way application penetrates the Fourth Noble Truths; conduct-virtue settles an impulsive nature allowing for a revealing meditation-concentration intuition, and in turn a recognition as a breakthrough insight-wisdom penetrates suffering's end.

Settled and focused, experience the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification not as a self actor but as a revealing clarification of life. Wisely Reflecting, acknowledge physical pressures; perception as identification or bias; feelings for sensual contact; mental reactions as thought impressions; conscious attention as a present recognition arising and fading.

Acknowledge how craving's urgency as a delight and pleasure is curtailed and doesn't link to future actions. Here you abide to know cessation from self-dominated compelling factors. The habitual buildup dispersing, equanimity stands out. Self-absorbed conceit falls away along with restlessness. Acknowledge cessation as peace from self-pursued involvement. Like a child no longer scared of the dark and his or her run away imagination subdued, self-illusion fades and a distinguishing insight emerges. The Middle Way climaxes as a realization of the Four Noble Truths' wisdom—a clarification and release from self-obsession.

Craving for desire, for self-identity and to escape are cut off. The Conditions Arising suffering cycle stops. A liberating insight stands out. The Noble Truths as practical, real and penetrating bring one to the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

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As though coming out from a dark cave, the Fourth Noble Truths clarification, understanding and wisdom is experienced as a personal realization and freedom from self-domination.

The Middle Way turns me away from my habits. Craving is stopped. There is an end to my suffering. I experience release from my self-obsession.

July 13—The Fourth Noble Truth Wisdom as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind*

“When my knowledge of seeing things as they really are was quite clear in these three aspects, in these twelve ways, concerning the Four Noble Truths, then I claimed to have realized the matchless, supreme Enlightenment in this world...” SN 56,11

The Fourth Noble Truth is understood and personally penetrated as the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed ending suffering: conduct-virtue (controlling acted on transgressing habits), meditation-concentration (controlling actively arisen habits), and insight-wisdom (eradicating dormant habits), cutting off self-consumed greed, hatred and confusion. The grand illusion lifted, one isn't measured, defined or consumed by the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification.

Self-deception is an endless pursuit from one painful and suffering episode to the next. Problems as answers, follow as an awareness opens to the Middle Way appreciation exorcising craving, keeping one tied to suffering. Everything in the conditioned world is a distraction and, ultimately, dissatisfying. The Truths as a Wisdom-Liberation reveals the Ultimate Reality; Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

Directed away from a craved body/mind obsession, acknowledge how your focus, view and understanding changes through applying the Middle Way's conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom. Craving after stopped, the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle is halted. Feel as awareness expands through Wise Reflection and insight as a non-self realization. Behind the impressions and feelings, behind the body/mind identification, the Fourth Truth Unshakeable Deliverance reveals liberation from self-promotion. The Noble Truths non-self insight dislodges self-illusion. The habitual buildup released, acknowledge as underlying subconscious motives wane, craving stops and self-manifestation is halted. Feel the relief and release as suffering ends to no longer delight or identify with the body, feelings, perception, mental reactions or conscious attention as a self-connection.

Like stepping through a mirror no longer be transfixed by a self-reflection, realized is the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana. Unshakeable, certain,

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confident, sure and undeniable, the deliverance from misunderstanding or ignorance is realized. Feel as the self-absorbed burden for a body/mind identification drops away. This present Sense Realm fixation is a child-like amusement.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact engages the Middle Way Path; Sustained Contact applies conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom; Interest ascertains the Middle Way significance ending suffering; 'Joy' directs the mind as a Wise Reflection for suffering's end; and having One-Pointed Clarity is the awareness, understanding and Wise Reflection distinguishing the Fourth Noble Truth Middle Way Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

Wisely Reflecting, feel how recognition expands as personal insight to the Unshakeable Deliverance wisdom recognition. The Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realization undercuts craving for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification to know suffering's end.

Follow as awareness gives way to knowing, knowing then gives way to insight, and a clarifying recognition. The noble insight displaces misunderstanding for life as self-related, directing one to Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

What a wrong turn self was. Wise Reflecting, I experience the Middle Way's benefits. I give up pursuing self to know suffering's end. Why suffer—why be a self actor?

July 14—Proper Wisdom*

“So he abides contemplating mind-objects internally, externally...contemplating arising phenomena...vanishing phenomena...just to the extent necessary for knowledge and awareness.” DN 22

Begun as a broad related awareness for the areas of body, feelings, mind and life-actions, expanded and matured through Wise Reflection as a personal and intuitive recognition for thoughts, speech and actions, the Four Noble Truths vision unifies as Proper Wisdom. Clarifying life and reality not only as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering as a non-self, the Truths are a breakthrough realization ending suffering—Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends. The mind is delivered from the deceived misunderstanding (ignorance) for life.

Settled and focused, calm and relax the many pressures and demands put on you through work, relationships and other worldly involvements. Acknowledge how the six contacted senses of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin and mind aren't actively distracting. Wisely Reflect on the moment without any self-disturbance. Note how craving's urgency as delight and pleasure has abated and is no longer compelling. Settling as relief and equanimity, feel the equanimous abiding and release from the self-promoted burden.

Here awareness is directed through the Four Noble Truths Proper Wisdom to distinguish life and reality as they are as well as the end of self-engaged suffering.

The Body

As a first point of reference including the breath quality, follow the Noble Truth Proper Wisdom to realize both external and internal generated conditions affecting the body. The Four Dynamic Forces join to make up the body and all things solid as so many impermanent and compounded actions. Established by its own set of conditions (as these change so does the condition fade and break-up), each particular dominating element makes for solidity, fluidity, temperature, or motion.

Simply acknowledge and reflect how extension (material form both hard and soft), cohesion (liquid, moisture and gas), temperature (heat/cold); and motion (space/air) come to arise, thrive, engage and persist in the union of the body as well as their fading. Reflect on the experience of extension (solid) that are the organs, tissues

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and skeleton as a biologically functioning union; cohesion (liquid) blood, moisture and excretions as an essential lubrication, vitality and support; temperature (heat/cold) is generated through blood circulation and the body's functions; and motion (space/air) the breath, air, respiration, and oxygen as well as motion and movement allowing for placement and function of the organs and physical features. Note the arising and fading patterns and conditioned particulars. Together these basic forces reflect the many actions in the 'one' or body.

As a Noble Truth Proper Wisdom clarification, regard the Conditions Arising causes and effects interaction. The many actions in the one, external solid, liquid, temperature and motion factors contribute to forming the body. As a Proper Wisdom, discern how the internal factors of the body arise and fade. The Conditions Arising causes and effects distinguished, the Noble Truth clarification is realized. Presently aware and Wisely Reflecting, attachment for the body falls away.

Open to a Middle Way appreciation. The body isn't taken as a personality view, isn't craved after as mine, nor attached to as a self-conceit. Whether considering the body internally or through external sources, the body arises and fades through so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Not to be identified, delighted in or pursued as a past, present or future self-association, one isn't measured or defined by the body. Proper Wisdom is followed as a personal and intuitive recognition. Disenchanted and dispassionate, the body as a body and isn't self.

Feelings

Pleasant, painful and neutral, the six senses of eyes, ears, nose tongue, skin and mind are bombarded by sensory activity both from external sources and affected internally as felt sense impressions. There is no moment that a degree of feeling isn't experienced as Conditions Arising causes and effects play out.

During meditation the senses and feelings are for the most part subdued to a neutral level, but known are all too well how they are overwhelming, exciting, lusted after, pursued, avoided, or ignored. Acknowledge how feelings are generated from sense contacted action and then spark a reaction. Whether considering feelings internally or through external sources, feelings arise and fade as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements.

As a Noble Truth Proper Wisdom clarification, discern the Conditions Arising causes and effects interaction. The many actions in the one, feelings are generated by contact, evoking reactions and responses. As a Proper Wisdom, recognize the factors as feelings arise and fade. Conditions Arising causes and effects distinguished, the Noble Truth clarification is discerned. Presently aware and Wisely Reflecting, felt attachments fall away.

Open to a Middle Way appreciation. Feelings aren't taken as a personality view, aren't craved after as mine, nor attached to as a self-conceit. Whether considering feelings internally or through external sources, feelings arise and fade through so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Not to be identified, delighted in or pursued as a past, present or future self-association, one isn't measured or defined by feelings. Proper Wisdom is followed as a personal and intuitive recognition. Disenchanted and dispassionate, feelings as feelings and aren't self.

The Noble Truth Proper Wisdom clarification: from the conditions of misunderstanding, a misconstrued self-notion rises and suffering plays out; following a Middle Way appreciation turning away from a self-obsession, life and reality are discerned as non-self; Nirvana as liberating cessation with self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

Body and feelings consume me, but I was mistaken. With Proper Wisdom I see them as so many joined actions and not self.

July 15—Proper Wisdom Continued*

“And he abides detached, not grasping at anything in the world. And that is how a [person] abides contemplating mind-objects as mind-objects in respect of the Four Noble Truths.” DN 22

The Mind

Habits churn and flash in the mind like so many distorted faces, jabbering mouths, and garbled sounds. The subconscious exposed, note the pressures and burden as a self-deceived identity is reflected. Feel the underlying stress behind the mental reactions compelling one to think, speak and act. Subconscious dormant, active and transgressing habits play out. Revealed is a misconstrued identification and attachment for mental reactions.

Note how memories are drawn upon and a self-history along with craving’s urgency dominates. Aware of the subconscious inner monologue and the chattering voice inside the head, realize that life and events don’t happen randomly but as purposeful action. Without pressing, follow this settled awareness away from a narrow, self-association. Follow the shift away from self-attachment to how consciousness changes to be restful, detached, relieved and released.

As a Noble Truth Proper Wisdom clarification, discern the Conditions Arising causes and effects interaction. The many actions in the one, the mind forms through contributing experiences of personal history, traditions and cultural make-up. As a Proper Wisdom, follow how factors for the mind arise and fade. Conditions Arising causes and effects distinguished, the Noble Truth clarification is discerned. Presently aware and Wisely Reflecting, mental attachments falls away.

Open to a Middle Way appreciation. The mind isn’t taken as a personality view, isn’t craved after as mine, nor attached to as a self-conceit. Whether considering the mind internally or through external sources, the mind arises and fades through so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Not to be identified, delighted in or pursued as a past, present or future self-association, one isn’t measured or defined by the mind. Proper Wisdom is followed as a personal and intuitive recognition. Disenchanted and dispassionate, the mind as mind and isn’t self.

The Noble Truth Proper Wisdom clarification: from the conditions of misunderstanding, a misconstrued self-notion rises and suffering plays out; following

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a Middle Way appreciation one turns away from a self-obsession to discern life and reality as non-self; Nirvana as liberating cessation with self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

Life-Actions

It is action that stirs consciousness but a misunderstood self-construed take emerges.

Action-moment after action-moment, challenges and conflicts arise. Contacted and impressed upon, day to day involvements are an assault. Grasping as a self actor, the burden and suffering associated with self follows. Sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair are experienced. Even if you are right it doesn't last for long.

As an intuitive experience, separate from the self-fixation. Note how as a self-associated conscious attention is affected. Through actions, consciousness arises. Follow the shift away from self-attachment and how consciousness changes to be relieved, released and detached.

As a Noble Truth Proper Wisdom clarification, regard the Conditions Arising causes and effects interaction. The many actions in the one, actions and phenomena make-up life. As a Proper Wisdom, discern how the life-action factors arise and fade. Conditions Arising causes and effects distinguished, the Noble Truth clarification for non-self insight is realized. Presently aware and Wisely Reflecting, life-action attachments fall away.

Open to a Middle Way appreciation. Life-actions aren't taken as a personality view, aren't craved after as mine, nor attached to life-actions as a self-conceit. Whether considering life-actions internally or through external sources, life-actions arise and fade through so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Not to be identified, delighted in or pursued as a past, present or future self-association, one isn't measured or defined by life-actions. Proper Wisdom is followed as a personal and intuitive recognition. Disenchanted and dispassionate, life-actions as life-actions and aren't self.

The Noble Truth Proper Wisdom clarification: from the conditions of misunderstanding, a misconstrued self-notion arises and suffering plays out; following a Middle Way appreciation turning away from a self-obsession, life and reality are discerned as non-self; Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

I feel a relief and unburdening through the Noble Truths Proper Wisdom. My self vision removed, I see life and reality as they truly are.

July 16—Wise Reflection for the Four Noble Truths *

“The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering is this: It is the complete cessation of that very craving, giving it up, relinquishing it, liberating oneself from it, and detaching oneself from it.” SN 56, 11

With so many directions and possibilities, where do you turn? What is the right way? The Four Noble Truths address suffering and suffering's end.

Wisely Reflecting, the First Noble Truth clarifies the self-deceived illusion as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. There is no true individual but rather the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self. Time in the traditional sense of minutes, days, months and years is an illusion, but rather multiple overlapping conditions, pressures, influences and elements as purposeful action play out. Actions can be long or short-lived, suffering or less suffering, but are supported and directed by one's habitual intentions. Follow an intuitive personal wisdom for life.

Wisely Reflecting, the Second Noble Truth clarifies craving's role in suffering. Absorbing one as delight and pleasure, craving is alluring in its power. Followed closely, craving joins up with habitual intentions and leads to future repercussions and suffering consequences. While mistaking life as self is undermining, craving is the active factor in continuing self-suffering torment.

Wisely Reflecting, the Third Noble Truth clarifies craving's cessation as suffering's end. Craving's threefold aspect as desire, self-identity and as an escape, charge a self-pursuit. Ever restless one seeks out self-fulfillment only to be dissatisfied. Through renunciation and restraint along with Wise Action, craving is stopped.

Wisely Reflecting, the Fourth Noble Truth clarifies the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path as the proper way to ending suffering. Detached from the self extremes for indulgence and hostility, one turns away from worldly pursuits. The Middle Way threefold application, transforming habitual domination to then eventually drop self-pursuit all together. The Four Noble Truths are realized as a Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. The Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana is known and experienced.

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Settled and centered, follow your Wise Reflection for the Four Noble Truths. Acknowledge how the body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are a misunderstanding and harmful burden. Life is a struggled accommodation to fulfill a self-image. Note the breath's quality as stressed and the mind blurred by impulsive habits. Acknowledge craving's urgency as the link to suffering is cut off. Deep-seated greed, hatred and confusion subdued, dormant, active and transgressing habits are disarmed. Through the Noble Truth clarification, Wise Understanding for life and reality is known the self-deceived illusion penetrated.

Awareness Penetration as Insight: Initial Contact as awareness for the body/mind self stressed dilemma; Sustained Contact connects with the self-identified mental states; Interest relaxes the self-absorption; 'Joy' turns to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self-domination; and having One-Pointed Clarity the Four Noble Truths clarification is experienced.

I literally feel my attachments falling away. The Four Noble Truths bring me to realize the affects of my self-delusion.

July 17—Craving, the Seamstress*

“The past is one end; the future is the second end; the present is in the middle; and craving is the seamstress. For craving sews one to the production of this or that state of existence.” AN 6, 61 (7), 2

Craving is classically referred to as a seamstress, joining subconscious habitual intentions (greed, hatred and confusion) to then carry over to future suffering consequences.

Settled and centered, acknowledge how the underlying subconscious dormant, active or transgressing habits are a divisive conceit and restless monologue. Craving for desire, a self-identity and as an escape, a self-absorbed imagination dominates. Follow how craving arises to link with past behavior for a presently contacted experience. Feel the thrill and desire related to self pleasure seeking. Note how craving goes on to indulge a self-promoted fantasy.

As a Noble Truth realization, acknowledge the attachment for a body/mind identification. Discerned is craving’s role joining habitual impulses as suffering consequences. The Middle Way is followed as conduct-virtue controls transgressing habits, meditation-concentration controls active habits, and insight-Wisdom eradicates dormant habits. The emperor without clothes, the self actor role playing is realized. You now know what you are up against and apply the Four Noble Truths accordingly.

Awareness Penetrations as insight: Initial Contact notes the flashing thought impression; Sustained Contact distinguishes greed, hatred or confusion; Interest as craving arises to discern the habit; ‘Joy’ as a Wise Reflection defuses craving’s urgency; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns the Noble Truth clarification as insight.

Always seeking after pleasure and delight, craving gets the better of me. Around and around I go in my suffering. Now I know better—to crave or not to crave. It’s all up to me.

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July 18—Craving Ceasing*

“This is peace, this is exquisite—the stilling of all fabrications, the relinquishment of all acquisitions, the ending of craving, dispassion, cessation, Nirvana.” MN 64

Craving is beguiling as a delight and pleasure (for desire, self-identity, or as an escape). What’s wrong with some fun? The problem is that one can never be completely fulfilled, become dissatisfied, and goes on to suffer. Contacted and affecting the senses, eyes/sight, ears/sound, nose/smell, tongue/taste, skin/tactile and mind/thoughts are temptations. Feelings arise and are then craved after, attachment takes place, commit then follows to action, and suffer follows.

Settled and centered, Wisely Reflect on body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Follow how your self-fantasy pursues, delights, seeks out pleasure in fulfilling a self actor. One is infatuated with self actor role playing. Closer to a child, you enjoy the attention, approval and want to be rewarded. Imagination and fantasy are all a part of craving. Follow how from a sense-contacted moment self springs into action. Feel as craving quickly leads to suffering. Note how craving’s compelling urgency draws one in as delight and pleasure. Acknowledge craving’s ability to transfer over and affect the future as suffering consequences.

As a Wise Reflection and personal insight, experience the release from craving and accompanying habits. Slowly allow the accumulated habits to disperse as non-self insight is realized. The self actor is a painful burden—longing for pleasure, at odds and hateful when challenged, while also being careless and neglectful in general. Recognize craving’s repercussion and how underlying habits bring one to suffering. Acknowledge the addiction to the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perceptions, mental reactions, and conscious attention). Connect with the underlying subconscious motives for craving as sensual gratification, self-identity, or as an escape. Closer to a survival instinct, these are primitive reactions. Impermanence strikes as a rude awakening. Like a child whose candy is taken away, one sulks, pouts and is disappointed. Craving after keeps one tied to the Conditions Arising causes and effects suffering cycle.

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The Four Noble Truths and Middle Way experience reveal life without self-domination—Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

Wisely Reflecting, the Noble Truths direct me to realize craving's end. The self actor is never happy and I remain restless and dissatisfied. I follow the Middle Way rather than the worldly ways.

July 19—The Fearless^{*}

“Whatever fears arise, all arise because of the fool, not because of the wise man...Therefore, you should train thus: ‘We shall be wise men, we shall be inquirers.’” MN 115, 2

It is upholding an esteemed self-identity that causes fear, desire, hatred, worry and confusion. What will happen to me? How do I get along? What next? More, less, inconvenienced, dissatisfied, having expectations—the self actor is weak, stumbles along, and is uncertain. Penetrating non-self insight and realizing craving’s cessation, the Four Noble Truths experience and insight are a fearless recognition. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification, after all, are an illusion; a clung to body/mind obsession—body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention. As a non-self experience, there is nothing in or about self to fear. The many actions give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self. There is no separate, unique or individual self, but a product and union of multiple conditions, pressures, influences and elements. This isn’t an extinction or spiritual suicide, but rather clearly seeing life and reality as they are—as so many non-self qualities underscored by purposeful action.

The restlessness and distracted attention felt at the start of most meditations is in part related to self-associated fear along with a general misunderstanding of life and reality. Settled and centered, acknowledge the breath’s quality reflecting a self-exaggerated fear. Sometimes obvious, at times subtle, always self-absorbed, follow as the self actor is unnerved and restless. Worries about work and family or general uncertainties as well as a one-sided view of life and death, self-deception is unsettling. Self-attachments and extreme reactions push one into a corner to defend and uphold a self-image. Note how the breath is stressed while the mind narrows and is painful focused. A misperception of life and reality is a self-consumed, fear-based suffering.

Gently relax the self-grasped clinging. Feel the gradual release of facial tension, jaw dropping, shoulders relaxing, chest opening outwards along with abdominal and pelvic pressure easing. Sense the attachment for the body/mind obsession that is the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (physical discomfort, a deluge of sense-contacted feelings, perception as a judgment and bias, conditioned mental reactions as deep-seated habits, and conscious attention as a self-perplexed

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awareness). Fear of heights, a phobia of crowded rooms or close quarters, ill at ease and insecure, the long list is all a self-related fear. The Four Noble Truths are a fearless recognition overcoming self-delusion to discerning non-self insight. Life and reality are clarified.

As underlying subconscious driven habits, self is your own creation. The Four Noble Truths reveal suffering's end—cessation from craving after to a penetrated non-self release. It is important not to grasp and make another self of non-self. Directed away from self-related fear, the Middle Way appreciation from self extremes is a balanced approach. The many actions in the 'one' (Conditions Arising causes and effects), realization of the Noble Truths insights is fearless penetration.

There is nothing to fear. It's all in my mind. I have only to control my overactive self-fantasy. Self has been my own creation. Realizing the Four Noble Truths, I'm fearless.

July 20—The Unfabricated*

“All phenomena have Nirvana as their final end.” AN 10, 58

Daily challenges leave one suffering like Humpty Dumpty, having to pick up the pieces of a crumbled self-image. All day long worldly pursuits are a challenge; to be all things to all people, reinvent one’s self, go one way then the next, try one thing then another. Greed and desire leave one wanting, hatred and angry are toxic reactions, and confusion and worry are bewildering.

Settled and centered, follow the breath’s quality as a basic relief. Now applying Wise Reflection, direct the mind to the cessation and release from charged habits and self-pursuit. The building blocks for self are misunderstanding life as self-related motives and craved after urgency. Without the proper conditions, pressures, influences and elements, self doesn’t form.

Lost in as a self-defined delusion, whatever is focused on, attended to, cognized and defined, this is what one becomes. There is the general craving for desire, self-identity and to escape complicated by greedy, hateful and confusing habits. Sense how you nurture, define, are attached and go on to promote self-related actions leading to suffering consequences. The many actions in the ‘one:’ the body joins and is strengthened through nourishment; feelings as pleasant, painful and neutral are experienced through sense-contacted impressions; perception judges, identifies and categorizes; mental reactions as the sum of personally direct experiences; and conscious attention relates to life in general as self.

Experienced through a Middle Way appreciation, the Noble Truths reveal Nirvana as the end of self-promoted actions as ‘unfabricated’ and having no conditioned nature. Follow the breath’s quality and open-flowing attention to turn away from a self-obsessed view and demanding worldly pursuits. This isn’t another self to build up and attach to, but rather an end to self-promotion. The threefold Middle Way guidance is a release that doesn’t play into the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle nor generates future consequences. The Four Noble Truths culminate in as breakthrough ‘Unfabricated’ recognition—Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference or self-promotion as suffering ends.

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Wisely Reflecting I see through my one-sided self-delusion. Removed from all my attachments and role playing, stopping craving, there is an 'Unfabricated' experience.

July 21—The Noble Truths as Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance*

“The total fading and cessation of ignorance, of this mass of darkness, is this peaceful, exquisite state: the resolution of all fabrications; the relinquishment of all acquisitions; the ending of craving; dispassion; cessation; Nirvana.” SN 48, 50

Aware, understanding and wise, the Four Noble Truths are experienced and realized as a practical application and not something to grasp onto continuing a self-expression. The mistaking of the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification revealed, craving the link to continued suffering, craving's cessation, and the Middle Way Path is followed suffering's end. The Four Noble Truths are a Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

Acknowledge how motives (dormant, active and transgressing) as an underlying subconscious monologue are unsettling and a restlessness. Self-obsession is an actual strangulation and suffering. Wisdom-Liberation then is an active recognition experienced as a Wise Reflection. As a deliverance from suffering, craving for desire, self-identification, or as an escape is stopped.

Self-associated habits are an obstacle. Attached to sense gratification, quick to hate or dismiss, and confused as a body/mind obsession, the Middle Way Path (detailed in full in August) as conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, are a Wisdom-Liberating clarification experience as release from the self runaround. Now connecting with the Four Noble Truths, acknowledge as misunderstanding and ignorance lift and the self-burden releases. Note as the breath as refined, calmed physically, and attention as awareness expands. Acknowledge the detachment from self, the Noble Truths realization is a Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

As the self-association and craving weaken, Wise Reflection turns away from worldly pursuits to a distinguished insight for life. Reality's complexity is realized as non-self actions. Acknowledge the relief from self-suffering. Practical, present related, timeless, encouraging investigation, leading inwards, and experienced personally as wisdom, the Noble Truths are a Signless, Desireless, Emptiness and Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

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Self keeps me craving and suffering. The Four Noble Truths are a true revelation and breakthrough. The Middle Way as discipline, concentration and insight, frees me from my self-obsession.

July 22—Cessation and Nirvana—The Deathless*

“The cessation of existence is Nirvana.” AN 5, 7

The Sense, Fine-Material and Immaterial Realms are self-defined and conditioned worlds underscored by purposeful action. The Four Noble Truths and Middle Way Path follow to craving's cessation and the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana, removed from self-promoted actions. If it weren't for the Four Noble Truths wisdom recognition and deliverance there would be no end to the suffering cycle.

Reflect back to the start of your Insight Meditation experience. From a self-misunderstanding, you were impulsive, distracted and dominated by reckless habits. Presently calm, patience and Wise Reflect direct your life. Intentions and actions are known and the subconscious revealed. You have willed yourself who you are. As a Noble Truth recognition, craving is stopped.

Personally experienced, the Middle Way starts with Wise Understanding of the Four Noble Truths as clarification. The ending of all self-affected ways, Nirvana is also known as the 'Deathless.' Removed from all self-reference for living out 'life and death' self-expressed scenarios, one comes to realize a 'Deathless' intuition. The complete cessation to the 'Deathless' is challenging because one is used to the high-powered energy show related to a self actor. The Noble Truths direct one to go deeper in as meditative awareness, personal recognition and appreciation to penetrate final deliverance. This isn't something you struggle to attain but quite the opposite, as a Middle Way experience release self-accumulated habits to know the 'Deathless' freedom ending self-promotion. Cessation comes from realizing the Four Noble Truths wisdom as release from craving's urgency.

Follow the breath's quality from stressed and anxiousness to a settled Wise Reflection. Slowly emptied is the accumulated habitual build up. Acknowledge the subduing of self-promoted craving to a selfless relief. Life is experienced and discerned differently through meditation. Sitting for an hour or more can feel like 5-10 minutes. Self is dictated by contact, stimulation, action and an off-base self-deception. Sense the slow release from habitual obsessions and the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Feel the body calming (facial muscles stretching, jaw dropping, shoulders down, and the chest, abdominal and pelvic areas relaxing). Note the relief from self-turmoil. Craving after is exhausting, bewildering and a

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suffering. Detaching from distractions and impulsiveness, experience equanimity as relief. The mind clears to an intuitive Wise Reflection. Following the Four Noble Truths recognize craving's urgency abating and the release from self-promotion.

Wisely Reflecting, follow the arising and fading associated with the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Physical sensations and pressures, arise and fade; feelings as pleasant, painful and neutral, arise and fade; thoughts, arise and fade; and life-actions, arise and fade. Removed from worldly pursuits and associated demands, realize the release and repose from impulsive habits and self-consuming actions. With self-reference cut off, the 'Deathless' is known.

Realized are the Four Noble Truths wisdom recognition: the First Truth as a Signless Deliverance for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification as non-self; the Second Truth as a Desireless Deliverance for craving's role as delight and pleasure; the Third Truth as an Emptiness Deliverance for craving's complete cessation; the Fourth Truth follows the Middle Way Path experience to suffering's end and the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

Don't get caught up in imagining what Nirvana is, but rather follow as an intuitive experience how craving ceases (for desire, self-identity or as an escape) and how self-association falls away. Beyond a self-fantasy, there is the 'Deathless'—Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends. A profound recognition, the true nature of life and reality is revealed.

The Four Noble Truths direct me to experience cessation from all my self-related longing. I don't have to suffer. I don't have to be myself. This is the Deathless.

July 23—Cessation as Happiness and Fulfillment*

“In whom there exists no provocation, and for whom becoming and non-becoming are overcome, he is one—beyond fear, blissful, without grief.” UD 2, 10

There is joy in this world and in life, but they are short-lived and dissatisfying. The simple creed of having sufficient food, clothing, shelter, and medicine as a basic well-being while dedicated to Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation are all that are needed. Anything more is a luxury as well as being a burdensome insecurity, object of theft, prone to breakdown, given to loss as well as disappointment.

The Four Noble Truths discerned, deliverance is made possible. The Middle Way Path is followed directing one to the Ultimate Reality removed from self-generated actions. Worldly pursuits are tied to the self extremes of indulgence and hostility, but Wisely Reflecting craving's cessation is realized to breakthrough to the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana.

One of the most helpful things you can do is have and apply renunciation and restraint for the incoming sensory deluge and flux of experiences. Responsible and mindful, renunciation and restraint are key in establishing conduct and virtue. The self actor is impulsive, greedy, hateful and confused. Applying the Five Wise Actions, goodwill stops hatred; generosity stops selfishness and theft; honest speech stops gossiping and lying; compassion stops sexual escapades; and sobriety stops alcohol and drug use.

Renunciation and restraint aren't a censorship but help bring recognition for subconscious habitual impulses. Don't become a meditating zombie divorced from life, but follow awareness, caring, and responsibility for one's thoughts, speech and actions. Life just doesn't happen, but is willed as a self actor through compromising habits and suffer experiences. Imagine a juggler going beyond his or her limits. So is life hurried, jostled, wearisome, and off balance.

Settled and centered, acknowledge the breath's quality. Sense where you are physically tense as well as mentally stressed. Reflect on the qualities of tranquility, assurance, clarity and understanding. Detach from impulsive habits and desires.

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Recognize the body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Following the breath's quality, feel the shift away from self-identification and the compelling urgency of habitual actions.

Through a distinguishing Wise Reflection and Proper Wisdom, the Four Noble Truths are discerned: the First Truth as a Signless Deliverance for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification as non-self; the Second Noble Truth as a Desireless Deliverance for craving's role; the Third Truth as an Emptiness Deliverance for craving's cessation; the Fourth Truth as following a Middle Way appreciation leading to the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

As a personal recognition, I experience and apply the Truths through my Wise Action. I subdue craving and control my habits to realize suffering's end.

Life Practice

July 24—The Four Noble Truths in Your Life*

Honest and straightforward, without passing judgment or being critical, realize how habitual intentions revolve around a self-illusion. Acknowledge the compelling personal agenda and problems undermining life. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are a suffering.

As a present awareness, you can only be in one place—a state of delusion dominated by careless habits as suffering or as a Noble Truth recognition for life and reality as non-self and to not suffer.

Ask yourself throughout the day while busy at work, out and about, or at home, “What am I doing...What did I mean by saying that...What is it that I want...What am I trying to prove?” This serves as a reminder to be connected and aware of one’s thoughts, speech and actions. One all-too easily gets caught up experiencing things from a limited self-perspective. Note the attached symptoms for a body/mind association as facial muscles are taut, jaw clenched, shoulders arched, and a rumbling nervous stomach. Acknowledge craving’s charge for desire, a self-identity and as an escape. Realize how craving as a delight and pleasure carries over to future actions. Experiencing lust, it is because of self-attached desire. Frustrated, it is because of self-attached hatred. Depressed or worried, it is because of self-confused.

The Four Noble Truths mature as Wise Reflection to Proper Wisdom, coming to terms with self-inflicted suffering. The Fourth Truth as the Middle Way Path (conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom) serves as liberation from habitually driven self-involved actions. The sum of your long journey through Insight Meditation, the Ultimate Reality, Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference or self-promotion as suffering ends is known. The Truths clarify life’s misunderstanding to a Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

Self is a suffering hoax. I’m left exhausted and crazed from the runaround. Stopping craving as delight and pleasure, I take control of my life. The Four Noble Truths are a profound recognition.

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July 25—The Hourglass Emptying*

An hourglass-like filled with impulsive habitual energies, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are a deception. Centered on the breath's quality, note the attachment for a body/mind association: physical stress dominates; feelings are experienced; perception as self-judgment and bias are passed; mental reactions as a personal history are projected; and conscious attention confuses life in general as self-related.

Settled and centered, Wise Reflection intensifies: the body weakens, arising and fading; feelings are pleasant, painful and neutral, arising and fading; perception identifies and judges, arising and fading; mental reactions reflect a personal history, arising and fading; and conscious attention mistakes life as self-oriented, arising and fading. Meditation is a direct experience for the Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action cycle. Slowly the sensory overload and contacted impressions weaken. Feel the release from the many dominating habit energies. Note how the mental monologue quiets down. As a release from this habitual nature, sense the spaciousness and equanimity as self recedes and insight emerges.

The Four Noble Truths are realized: the Signless Deliverance for the Five Groups reflect the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self; the Desireless Deliverance for the upheaval craving exerts on life; the Emptiness Deliverance for craving's cessation and suffering ending (the causes and effects suffering cycle defused); and the Middle Way Path followed to the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind, eradicating self-deception and clarifying life.

Acknowledge tranquility, equanimity and the penetrating concentration as a relief and release from craved after pursuits. Cessation experienced, note how conceit and restlessness fall away. The Ultimate Reality, Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends is known.

Keeping me off balance, distracted and restless, self weights on me. As I meditate, things slow down and I wisely recognize life as it is. Self has been my own doing.

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July 26—The Middle Way*

Misunderstood has been the body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Self-obsessed habits dominate. You are responsible for life's drama. Following a Middle Way appreciation, turn away from self extremes to Wise Reflection and Proper Wisdom as a distinguishing insight for life. Now can you all together drop the self-obsession? Fulfillment through the Noble Truths ends suffering and out does any short-lived worldly gains.

The Middle Way appreciation and guidance is threefold: an application of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom. Stripped away are the underlying layers of dormant, active and transgressing habits related to greed, hatred and confusion. Renunciation and restraint as well as the Five Wise Actions are an accountability for one's actions. Insight Meditation as a personal Wise Reflection is a deepening recognition and penetration—the Four Noble Truths as Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

Be aware of the ongoing mental monologue and where motives are leading you. What are you involved in and why? Is desire compromising? Are you doing too much or involved in needless pursuits? Trying to fulfill a self-illusion is dissatisfying. In rapid fire sequence, feel the charged runaround for how motives go on to join as craving then to link as suffering consequences.

In practical terms, doing less is best. Following the breath's quality, settle to bring calm and sanity back into your life. Responsible for most of your illnesses and mental instability, the self merry-go-round is dizzying and unhealthy. Apply a Middle Way appreciation and pace yourself. Wisely Reflecting, discern craving's symptoms (for desire, self-identity, and as an escape), attachments, and tormenting problems. Actively engage in renunciation and restraint for sensory contacted stimulation. Don't give in to the first impulse to gratify your habits. Don't be overwhelmed by anger or frustration, but connect with patience and goodwill. Acknowledge how motives spawn craving as delight and pleasure leading to future consequences. Know the relief and release to actually not suffer. Equanimity stands out.

I hear the voices echoing in my head wanting and desiring, angry and confused. The Noble Truths and Middle Way direct me to sanity.

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July 27—Your Wise Reflection as Distinguished Insight*

Insight Meditation and a Middle Way appreciation are a distinguishing insight. The Four Noble Truths are penetrated as Wisdom-Liberation to the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind (the eradication of self-habits and the clarification of misunderstanding). One goes from suffering to wisdom recognition and the Ultimate Reality, Nirvana without self-reference or self-promotion.

Settled and centered on the breath's quality, acknowledge the shift away from stressed self-obsessed views and attachments. Connect with the awareness for the four grounded areas of body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Through the experience of Insight Meditation self-identification is defused. Not an intellectual deception, follow as Wise Reflection discerns life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Not identified, delighted in or pursued as a past, present or future self-association, one isn't measured or defined by self.

Awareness Penetration as Insight: Initial Contact connects with the breath's quality and attention; Sustained Contact acknowledges with the mental state as desiring, hateful or confused; Interest notes the underlying self-impulse of intentions and craved after delight; 'Joy' relaxes the self-urgency to a settled dormant level; and having One-Pointed Clarity is experienced as a clarifying wisdom for the Ultimate Reality, the Unconditioned Realm.

What a recognition to go from self-domination to wisdom realization of my life. Wise Reflecting, I experience life as it actually is—without self-delusion.

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July 28—Cessation and Non-Self*

Through conditions, pressures, influences and elements, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification arise from many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self. Action begets action and in the background is purposeful action motivated by habitual intentions compromising life. Craving after as delight and pleasure joins with intentions to manifest as future consequences. The Four Noble Truths recognition clarifies life as non-self, craving's role, craving ceasing, and the Middle Way Path followed to liberation.

Following the Five Wise Actions as well as applying renunciation and restraint, self-intoxication and carelessness give way to Wise Reflection and a personal insight. Realizing the self-charade, dropped are all self-promoted ways. Acknowledge the release and relief through Insight Meditation. Life slows down and discerned is the purposeful action connecting moments and experiences. Conditions Arising causes and effects stand out. Revealed is how misunderstanding as a self actor form thrives, craves, becomes attached and suffering follows.

As a Wise Reflection, discern the Four Noble Truths Proper Wisdom. Allowing self-associated habits to disperse, a clarity and understanding emerge to know patience, have caring and good will, insight and equanimity. With restlessness controlled the Noble Truths wisdom deliverance is penetrated. Acknowledge the settling of the mind and habitual impulses ceasing. Craving is realized as the link to suffering, but with desire muted cessation is realized. The Noble Truths recognition is real, practical and personally discerned. One goes from self-obsessed to a non-self insight and the fulfillment of cessation. Suffering's end is real. Sense the detachment as habits disperse. An abiding equanimity, the Noble Truth's Proper Wisdom is realized—cessation and liberation.

I view life as a deeper appreciation and understanding. Yes, I've lived as a self actor, but now I relate to the Noble Truth wisdom to separate from my suffering ways.

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July 29—Suffering's End*

When first sitting to meditate, a self-obsession absorbs one. The unsettling is manifested subtly and not so subtly—face drawn, shoulders hunched up, stomach upset, nervous ticks, or migraine headaches. Escaping through overeating, indulging in caffeine drinks, sugar intake, chain smoking, downing prescription pills or partaking in occasional recreational drug use and consuming alcohol, seeking sexual outlets, or over spending impulsively on shopping sprees—self-obsession and worldly pursuits are a suffering.

Watch yourself and be aware of the many signs and warnings as motives, craving and actions escalate to suffering levels. Feel how the breath changes to a tense and heavy respiration. Heart rate increases and blood pressure rises as self-delusion plays out. The mind and thoughts painfully narrow. Sense-contacted impressions are overwhelming. Restless and desiring, once craving emerges note the urgency compelling one to act. From a long history self deluded history, craving and attachment end in suffering.

The emperor without clothes, the Noble Truths expose the pitfalls surrounding self-deception. You can never go back as before to the role playing delusion or the fiction that is self. The Noble Truths confirm the true nature of life—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Experiencing the Noble Truths is a practical insight. As the link to suffering, acknowledge how craving after as delight and pleasure is manifested. Non-self insight as a Noble Truth clarification, the Middle Way guidance is followed as liberation from self-domination. The Truths reveal the Ultimate Reality, Nirvana.

You may be calm while meditating, but no sooner have you finished does craving's urgency show itself. Note how the Monkey Mind distractions compromise the mind. Craving then joins with the habitual impulse to play out as a compromising action. Renunciation and restraint are a first line of defense for sensuality and the six senses. Wisely Reflecting, vigilant and responsible, the Noble Truths insights clarify the self-deceived fairytale.

The First Truth as a Signless Deliverance for the Five Groups and the actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self; the Second Truth as a Desireless Deliverance for the upheaval craving exerts; the Third Truth as an Emptiness Deliverance for craving's

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cessation, bringing a halt to the causes and effects suffering cycle; and the Fourth Truth as the Middle Way Path is followed eradicating self-deception to realize the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

The self actor charade exposed, I'm humbled. How can I ever go back to my old ways? Who wants to suffer? The Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way make liberation a real possibility.

July 30—Compassion and Healing*

A profound compassion is behind the Four Noble Truths—suffering ends as you have literally been harming and bringing yourself to suffer. There is a certain amount of unsettling to break with self-centered ways. Ego slowly deflates like a balloon with a pin-prick leak. Craving's cessation comes about as a gradual release. Habits aren't dropped overnight but applying Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation follow a wiser direction. Patience is developed, the Monkey Mind calmed, you are all the wiser and better off. Wise Action is a responsible consideration and recognition for dealing with long standing habits. The Four Noble Truths as Proper Wisdom are a transforming realization. The Middle Way Path is followed as a Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

Acknowledge the physical pressures as well as affecting mental states. Note how craving seeks to fulfill a self-image. Wisely Reflecting, follow the body/mind charade that is the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Penetrated is craving's role as the link to suffering. Acknowledge craving's cessation breaking with the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle. The Noble Truths penetrated, a Proper Wisdom clarification for life is discerned. There is no greater reward and bliss than not to suffer.

Follow the simplicity and clarity that now has centered life through Insight Meditation and a Middle Way appreciation. Before a careless self-confusion dominated. Releasing habitual domination, sense the spaciousness as self gives way to an open-flowing awareness. The qualities of tranquility, concentration and equanimity stand out. Cessation is experienced for self-attachments, obsessions and addictions. Feel the quiet joy and fulfillment that is the Noble Truth Deliverance. As self-obsession attachments fall away, craving ceases. With no one to be, with no becoming, a distinguishing insight is engaged. A personally insightful journey, penetrated is non-self freedom.

A calm abiding, ease and equanimity directs one to experience the Unconditioned Realm. Freed from suffering, Nirvana is the greatest joy and happiness possible.

What a breakthrough realization. This is profound and a one of a kind joy—my suffering ended!

July 31—The Illness and the Cure*

If a person was seen running down the street yelling that he or she was being chased but no one was seen giving chase, you might wonder about that person. Well, self is kind of like that as self-derived subconscious habits give chase. Exhausting, tormenting and painful, self is a suffering.

Self isn't only a misunderstanding of life and reality but an actual mental illness. Each person is hindered and burdened to some degree by their self-torment. The problem is there is no one to point out to you that you are insane. But meditating, life begins to slow down, the breath is calmed, mind tranquil to recognize the self actor illusion as culprit and the farfetched delusion consuming one. Meditating, you are your own therapist, bringing healing and closure to self-addiction.

The Noble Truths identify the illness as a self-illusion, craving as the link escalating to suffering, craving's cessation as suffering's end, and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path (August) as the cure for the self-ordeal.

Immediately realized is how one breathes as a self actor. The mind wanders and succumbs to Monkey Mind Distractions. From here careless and impulsive actions form from subconscious dormant, active and transgressing generated self-obsessed habits. Conditions Arising as causes and effects, one moment and misstep begets another and suffering is experienced.

The Middle Way is crucial to settling and bringing equanimity to life. Acknowledge how the breath relaxes, physically calming down, and mentally relieved to then go on to be unburdened from self-attachment. Now with the Noble Truths clarification, the self-ordeal is realized. The body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention, have been taken to be self. Sense the craving and attachment to upheld and satisfy a self-illusion. Acknowledge the restlessness for and surrounding a self-notion. Meditating, the true nature of life and reality are realized; Conditions Arising causes and effects as purposeful action, multiple actions give the illusion of the 'one' or self. Penetrating the Noble Truths Proper Wisdom, the cure and freedom from being a self-infirm person is known.

Initially the Middle Way is a detachment from self extremes, but when applied through the Four Noble Truths recognition, self-centered insanity is cured. Acknowledge the cessation from self-reference and self-promotion as craving as

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delight and pleasure is eradicated. Dropped is the self-association for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Realized is that one doesn't have to suffer.

I know myself. What a fiction I've lived out! Through the Noble Truths Proper Wisdom I open to know life as clarified and without self-deception.



**AUGUST—
The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path
Deliverance to Suffering's End**



Climbing a mountain you wouldn't rush up the sheer cliff or running a marathon one wouldn't sprint all out. A steady, conscientious, dedicated approach is needed. Now as the climax to the Four Noble Truths vision and insight, the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path experience is followed to Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance—the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm known; Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference or self-promotion as suffering ends.

Traditionally the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is referred to as turning a wheel, putting into motion the profound significance of the Four Noble Truths with the eight Middle Way factors as spokes framed by the Truths. As a practical metaphor and analogy, it may be useful to also see the Middle Way as a pyramid with the eight factors as building blocks joining to tower together as a personal wisdom experience bringing self-suffering to an end. As part of the Middle Way insight-wisdom realization, Wise Understanding of the Four Noble Truths is at the base of the pyramid with conduct-virtue and meditation-concentration following. In this way, all three areas of the Middle Way support one another in eradicating self-delusion.

The Middle Way climaxes as a Noble Truth wisdom fruition. Also referred to as the final action to end all self-related action, the Middle Way stands in contrast to the extremes of sensual indulgence and hostility bordering on self-abuse. A deceived and gross misunderstanding, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention) are an illusion.

Dealing in worldly pursuits, you have been accident prone and lost. What began seven months earlier as a basic awareness connection, Wise Reflection was

developed as a personal intuition, goodwill cultivated; the Monkey Mind tamed; becoming responsible through Wise Action; realizing impermanence as well as the non-self nature of life; recognizing the effect subconscious intentions have on life (dormant, active and transgressing); penetrating the Conditions Arising causes and effects (the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self) as purposeful action; and saw how craving after as delight and pleasure brought one to continued suffering. Here now through the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path the self-charade is brought to an end.

If a vitamin tablet had only one mineral or nutrient, it wouldn't be all that affective. Penetrated by the Four Noble Truths, the prescribed supplement for ending suffering is the full regime of the Noble Eightfold Path—conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, insight-wisdom (Wise Understanding, Wise Intention, Wise Speech, Wise Action, Wise Livelihood, Wise Effort, Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration). The Middle Way Path is a matured harmonious experience and understanding. As a profound wisdom recognition, following the eight emphasized areas brings to an end self-suffering.

The Four Noble Truths and Middle Way Path have always existed, but self-delusion kept one from knowing the emancipating truth. However, one must be careful not to substitute or create another self-attachment. The Middle Way is founded on the Four Noble Truths understanding. All encompassing, beyond the conventions of time, culture, history or self-expressed constraints, the Noble Truths clarify life; how actions and conditions arise and play out, the cessation of actions and conditions, and the Middle Way Path deliverance ending suffering.

Channeling a harmony of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, the Middle Way guidance follows to Stream Entry passage headed to final Wisdom-Liberation and the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind. Wisdom then is an active participation and not just an intellectual endeavor; a twofold experience as knowledge and release ('fruit and reward'). Never again to fall back into self-promoted suffering, habits are eradicated through the four stages of Stream Entry passage.

Referred to as a cooling down, a thirst quenched, or a fire gone out, Nirvana relates to the complete eradication and emancipation from compromising thoughts and actions as well as liberation from the conditioned causes and effects cycle. The Middle Way experience exorcizes self-conceit, restlessness and misunderstanding.

August 1—Preliminary Understanding*

“Ignorance is the leader in the attainment of unskillful qualities, followed by lack of conscience and lack of concern.” SN 45,1

Within the Noble Eightfold Path there are two levels of experience and understanding: the Preliminary Path (also referred to as the mundane) and that of Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance (super mundane). The Preliminary Path follows the Middle Way as a basic moral guidance while Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance is the Middle Way climaxing in suffering’s end and the breakthrough to the Unconditioned Realm liberation, Nirvana. The Preliminary application are steps everyone must take as a maturing, personal intuition and natural passage. However, the Four Noble Truths haven’t been fully comprehended. Both are structured around the Middle Way guideline of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, and insight-wisdom; the Preliminary as general self-control and Wisdom-Liberation as emancipation from self-suffering.

Dominated as a self actor by habits as well as worldly pursuits, the self-charade is taken as real. Mistaking life as a one-sided experience and responding carelessly, craving after as desire, self-identity and as an escape leads to suffering. Years of conditioning and ingrained habits don’t disappear overnight. There has been a lot of ‘wrong understanding,’ but through Insight Meditation and Wisely Reflecting, a penetrating, slow-focus relevance for the true nature of life is known. The Four Noble Truths big picture of non-self insight, Conditions Arising as purposeful action, and cessation from self-promoted actions begins to be understood. The Middle Way is followed as the action to end all self-related action.

Everyone passes through this same rite of passage as an appreciation for the role of karmic good and bad actions. There are ten detrimental and ten beneficially willed actions (three mental, four verbal and three bodily). Preliminary Understanding focuses on ‘good’ or beneficial karma as a higher moral ground. Best serving one’s self and others by being aware, engaged and responsible, the Noble Truths recognition hasn’t been penetrated. Here the Middle Way is more the ‘golden rule.’

Acknowledge how the breath is stressed and how the mind narrows around self-defined impressions. Acknowledge craving to fulfill a self-identity. Breathe deeply to relax facial tension (lined forehead, lips tightly closed, jaw clenched) as well as chest, abdominal and pelvic pressures. As a Preliminary Understanding the Middle Way serves to connect with subconscious dormant, active and transgressing

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intentions. The thought before the thought or action, follow how a habitual urgency forms. Note how a body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification dominates. Acknowledge how charged habits undermine life. Subconscious intentions flare up as provocation. Sense the underlying struggle as images flash and urge one on to think, speak and act. Recognize the ongoing conflict to fulfill self-expectations. Avoiding the extremes for indulgence and hostility, the Middle Way experience is without judgment, bias or attachment.

There is general awareness for life as impermanent, dissatisfying and a basic non-self realization. However, the Four Noble Truths are taken for granted without true insight. The self actor engages in greed, hatred and confusion, leading to compromising actions giving way to suffering consequences. The Five Wise Actions are applied as a moral guideline transforming hate to goodwill; miserliness and theft to generosity; lying to honesty and truthfulness; lust to caring and compassion; and drug and alcohol use to clear-minded sobriety.

Below the level of tranquility that meditation first allows, sense the ongoing conceit and restlessness tied to self-obsession. Acknowledge the persistent karmic impulses of dormant, active and transgressing habit potentials. Facial stress, increased heart rate and blood pressure, and assorted physical tension, along with mental confusion, mask an underlying self-actor.

Feel the buildup of accumulated habits. Through the breath's awareness note the stress, tension and pressure in the body as well as the mind (the two communicating and reflecting engaged self-involvement). Gently relax and release the compounded self-anxiety. Sense the clinging and domination of the self actor (facial muscles and abdomen taut as well as thinking blurred). Allow greed, hatred and confusion to slowly disperse.

Awareness Penetration as concentration: Initial Contact settles through the breath's awareness; Sustained Contact as an intensified Wise Reflection regards the mental state; Interest senses the habit plagued thoughts; 'Joy' follows a Middle Way appreciation away from self-extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a Preliminary Understanding for self-expressions.

The Middle Way experience matures as a Noble Truth wisdom recognition.

I note the flashing disturbances and low key murmuring of karma affecting me. Meditation establishes awareness and the Middle Way directs me away from self-domination.

August 2—Preliminary Intention*

“Intention, I tell you, is karma. Intending, one does karma by way of body, speech, and intellect.” AN 6, 63

Recognizing how habits echo as a subconscious intended provocation to think, speak and act. You can either be out of touch and have careless intentions or are aware to be responsible and have wise intention—desire, hatred and harming vs. renunciation for desire, goodwill and compassion. Intentions or motives play a crucial role in directing life. Here the Middle Way conduct-virtue serves as a moral compass. This Preliminary experience is like heeding road signs rather than a true insight.

Breathe deeply relaxing facial tension (lined forehead, lips tightly closed, jaw clenched) as well as chest, abdominal and pelvic pressures. As a Preliminary Understanding the Middle Way is a basic insight for one’s actions. Sense the struggle as flashing impressions lead to thoughts, speech and action. Gently ease deeper into the meditation to recognize self-related stress. Acknowledge the shift away from dominating detrimental habits to a calm and intuitive Wise Reflection. Avoiding the extremes for indulgence and hostility, the Middle Way experience is without judgment, bias or attachment.

Feel the buildup of accumulated habits. Through the breath’s awareness note the stress, tension and pressure in the body as well as the mind (the two communicating and reflecting engaged self-involvement). Gently relax and release the compounded self-anxiety. Sense the clinging and domination of the self actor (facial muscles and abdomen taut as well as thinking blurred). Allow greed, hatred and confusion to slowly disperse.

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Renunciation—Restraint as patience for sense-contacted experiences is applied. Not indulging or giving into sensual gratification, the mind clears as the desiring urgency settles down. Calm and reflecting, self-serving ways give way to Wise Intention. Wisely Reflecting, the present is seen and experienced without self-involvement. Applying renunciation, the Five Wise Actions are followed accordingly.

Goodwill—Not a mere pacification, but goodwill is experienced as a peaceful sharing. Caring and generous, self-serving ways give way to Wise Intention. Wisely Reflecting, the present is seen and experienced without self-involvement. Applying goodwill, the Five Wise Actions are followed accordingly.

Compassion—Resolve and without hostility or aggression, habits are redirected. Patient, kind and tolerant, self-serving acts give way to Wise Intention. Wisely Reflecting, the present is seen and experienced without self-involvement. Applying compassion, the Five Wise Actions are followed accordingly.

Awareness Penetration as concentration: Initial Contact settles on the breath's quality; Sustained Contact as an intensified Wise Reflection regards how subconscious intentions form; Interest discerns how greed, hatred, harming as well as renunciation, goodwill and compassion arise; 'Joy' follows a Middle Way appreciation rather than be self-inclined; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a Preliminary Intention notes the self-expression.

The Middle Way experience slowly matures as a Noble Truth wisdom recognition.

I see into my intentions and how they lead me on as a self actor.

August 3—The Immeasurables*

“Here a disciple dwells pervading one direction with his heart filled with loving-kindness, compassion, shared-joy and equanimity, likewise the second, the third, and the fourth direction; so above, below and around; he dwells pervading the entire world everywhere and equally with his heart filled with loving-kindness, abundant, exalted, measureless, free from enmity and free from distress.” DN 13

Helping transform intention is the powerful experience of the Immeasurables (loving-kindness, compassion, shared joy, and equanimity). The self actor is only motivated to further his or her own interests. The Immeasurables direct one from a self-limiting focus to an open, accepting Wise Reflection. Intentions slowly transform to become devoid of self-directed desire, hatred and harming. Loving-kindness, compassion, shared joy, and equanimity are ‘immeasurable.’ Their qualities are all inclusive, unbounded, without limits or hindrances. The Immeasurables awaken altruistic qualities and provide a meaningful perspective to something other than one-sided habitual domination. As a formal meditation practice, the Immeasurables open conscious awareness to penetrate to a deeper understanding, wisdom and peace. There isn’t enough love or goodwill in the world.

Through the intention of loving-kindness, compassion, shared joy, and equanimity, feel how a gentle realization and moderation pervade thoughts as goodwill. Acknowledge the settling down and how it is to actually be without hostility and ill will. Follow as kindness is radiated towards one’s self as well as others without limiting, self-imposed barriers. Note how narrowed, self-directed intentions broaden to acceptance and benevolence. The Immeasurables go on to favorably affect dormant, active and transgressing habits. Self-perspective shrinks as a Middle Way appreciation stands out. It isn’t enough to talk platitudes but to go on and genuinely extend and share kindness. Not seeing or taking the other person to be a threat, patience and tolerance are known.

Loving-Kindness

There can be an initial resistance to loving-kindness as well as having awkward feelings and uncertainty. Many people would prefer not to show or aren’t accustomed to expressing their sensitive, caring nature. Without good reason, it is even considered a sign of weakness and vulnerability to be compassionate. Many years of wounded, anger, and upset leave one alienated. Transforming

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longstanding habits doesn't come over night. Before ever caring for someone else, one must first have the patience, gentleness and forgiveness to bring healing to one's self.

After doing a brief body scan, draw your attention inward. Smile. Be at ease. Following the breath, feel the calm, tranquility and stillness. The moment settles. Removed from stressful responsibilities and everyday challenges, take a moment to care. Realize that joy and happiness are also part of life.

Follow the calm permeating throughout the body. Meditation is a happiness removed from self-related stress. Acknowledge how the mind expands to be clear. Sit with the calm and comfort that arises. Note how the gentleness softens and opens areas that had been tense and difficult. Blocked or pressured, allow the breath to relax and stress to release. Don't try to do anything that seems unnatural. Be open and at ease.

Loving-kindness is done in a sequence of visualizations, reflections and offerings. Take note of the entire person. Connect with the breath, body, feelings and mind. Note how the breathing naturally slows and body calms. Feelings settle and the mind follows to quiet down. Caring and goodwill are established.

Following how the energy of loving-kindness has been brought out. Offer and extend the same concern to a family member, friend or acquaintance. Meditating, take the time to relate to the other person. Feel the caring bonds. Realize the connection to other people.

At once healing and transforming, loving-kindness is a powerful realization. A one-sided self-focus is reshaped; from one dimensional to being receptive, flexible, generous and willing.

Not only a creature of habit, there is also much good in me. I take the time to cultivate loving-kindness for myself as well as for others. As anger and resentment are dropped, I feel patience and acceptance. .

August 4—Compassion *

“You must utter no unkind words...you must always be compassionate.” MN 21

Compassion shouldn't be confused with pity or sorrow as placing a value judgment on someone's misery. When compassionate, sympathy, caring, and understanding connect you with the other person's problem and hardship. Having passed through similar ordeals, one is linked to other's misfortune.

Feel a naturally soften and opening up through compassion. Allow for caring and sympathy. There are areas that are hard and reserved. Note, smile and breathe, extending compassion to one's self. Filled with jealousy, bitterness or anger, you may not have acted justly in the past, but now go on to be forgiving. The wrongdoing can't be changed, but there can be closure, forgiveness and compassion.

Feel the breath as a gentle wisp connecting with the awareness of compassion. The body is calm while the mind opens in empathy. It can feel as though a dam of pent-up sorrows is released. Feel sympathy and consideration. Sorrows are known, but give way to mercy and compassion. To forgive and be accepting is to have compassion. Open up through the breath, body and mind to a reflected consideration. As anger and disappointment lift, feel the move away from a self-centered perspective. There are other options than belittling, humiliation, disgust or angry. You are compassionate.

To be connected through compassion is to understand and come to terms with the past. There must be forgiveness; a compassionate resolution. Allow compassion to touch all life. Accept and be forgiving of yourself as well as of others. Going from holding grudges to caring brings closure to the past, is healing and freeing. Know the depths of compassion, recognizing how self-attachments are detrimental. Release any bitterness. Acknowledge closure and peace. Know the power and the far reaching transformation of compassion.

Generate and offer compassion to others and the world over. Sense how light and buoyant you feel as though able to touch the remote corners of the world. The Immeasurables are inclusive. Compassion goes on to embrace all sorrow-stricken and suffering beings—including one's self.

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There has been too much divisiveness on my part. What has it brought me? There must be forgiveness and closure. Compassion is healing.

August 5—Shared Joy*

“Happy are they and sorrowless that have no selfish love in the world. Whoso seeks the sorrowless dispassion, should have no selfish love in the world.”
UD

Shared joy opens to a good nature and the simplest of virtues—to be happy for others. Often the day is filled with only what you can do for yourself and how to get ahead without little regard for other people. A self-perspective alienates the world at large. There is no escaping the connection, need and reliance of other people. As a genuine happiness and respect, see the other person not as a threat but as part of your life and on the same journey. Know sympathetic and care for others.

Breathe in joy and gladness to truly know these qualities throughout the body and mind. Feel light-hearted, at ease and the contentment when not focused as a self actor. Note how resentment, bitterness and jealousy slip away. Be happy in your life. There is the simple joy to realize how far along you have come and progressed on this Insight Meditation journey. Note the difference when angry, jealous or experiencing ill will. The selfish actor is suffocating and a complication.

Yes, there is happiness when aware, open and receptive. Experience the genuine acceptance for others and their well-being. Everyone is a friend and ‘family.’ There is caring and joy. Notice how you have emerged from a petty self-shell to be concerned.

Caring naturally extends from me to include others. I feel richer and rewarded to be in a circle of friendship and goodwill.

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August 6—Equanimity*

“Indeed the liberation of the mind...by equanimity should be developed by a man or a woman.” AN 10, 208

Equanimity is an even-tempered, happiness and fulfillment from within and without discrimination, judgment or attachment. Patience and acceptance stand out. Loving-kindness, compassion, and shared joy deepen as awareness to a fulfilled equanimity. Equanimity is a natural conclusion to the Immeasurables. From a stand point of confidence, assurance and peace, everything and everyone is held in equal regard and esteem.

Feel equanimous abiding through the breath, body and mind. Note the warmth of goodwill. Starting from further down at the abdomen, breathing is easier. Feel the relaxation as though floating on a cloud. Pressed feelings and sensations are neutralized. Thoughts are settled, awareness opens, and concentration clears. The self-directed focus vanishes. There is only tranquility and peace. Equanimity extends to the world at large, embraces both the good and the bad, the challenging and difficult. Equanimity's settling is an open acceptance and tolerance taking in all people, situations and experiences. To know the Immeasurables is to be a fulfilled and understanding person. The self actor spins out of control and is absorbed in counter productive energies. All warring, rancor and bitterness end.

A deepened composure as well as assurance, without self-directed ambition there is nothing to prove, pursue, gain or uphold—one is equanimous. The habitual intentions of desire, hatred and harming stopped, equanimity arises as a natural relief and release from self-justification. Equanimity follows insight as detachment and release from self-pursuits. Without habits forming to crave, the Conditions Arising suffering cycle is nullified.

Equanimity is a joyful recognition devoid of self-infused intentions. Unmoved by everyday challenges, adversity or distractions, equanimity forms as a true and natural fulfillment and peace for one' self as well as others. Knowing acceptance, patience and goodwill, the body is at ease and the mind clear.

Self keeps me at a distance and living a certain degree of stress. But now truly settled and at ease, I'm without aggression or hostility. Peaceful solutions and resolutions come to light.

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August 7—Preliminary Speech*

***“Speak only the speech
that neither torments self
nor does harm to others.
That speech is truly well spoken.***

***“Speak only endearing speech,
speech that is welcomed.
Speech when it brings no evil
to others
is pleasant.” SN 3, 3***

Established in the basic understanding for karma as a moral guidance, the Middle Way emphasizes conduct-virtue as responsibility for one’s actions through Wise Reflection. Here speech is a fourfold directive—truthful, timely, caring and engaged speech.

Of course, what is really emphasized is control over the mind and self-absorbed ways. The affect of Wise Intention and consideration for speech reflects an aware and responsible person and not someone who is dominated by worldly pursuits. Avoiding the extremes for indulgence and hostility, the Middle Way experience follows without judgment, bias or attachments.

Truthful Speech: Words and communication are honest, straight forward, without deception and express trust. Wisely Reflecting, intentions are realized and where you are headed.

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Timely Speech: There is no need to run off at the mouth to communicate every whimsical thought. But rather there is a better sense of the moment and the other person. If there is nothing beneficial to say then Noble Silence is followed. Listening is an important characteristic and quality to have. Wisely Reflecting, intentions are realized and where you are headed.

Caring Speech: Words can be hurtful or helpful, insulting or of benefit. More harm is done by ill spoken words and character assassination than physical actions. Words can be a spear-like stabbing or a soothing expression. Wisely Reflecting, intentions are realized and where you are headed.

Engaged Speech: Gossip and idle chatter reflect the weaker and ignoble self actor qualities. One is thoughtful not to get carried away, back stab or spread rumors, pausing and reticent before blurting things out. Wisely Reflecting, intentions are realized and where you are headed.

Acknowledge as habitual pressures flash, are consuming, seek articulation and are communicated as speech. Verbalizing intentions, language falls into self-directed patterns. Greed, hatred and confusion compel one to voice acceptance or disapproval and plunge into conflict with others and the world at large. Feel the unsettling revolving around self-association as the mind races to justify, is vexed and complains. Through a Middle Way appreciation one settles down to have control through honest and wholesome responses.

Feel the buildup of accumulated habits. Through the breath's awareness note the stress, tension and pressure in the body as well as the mind (the two communicating and reflecting engaged self-involvement). Gently relax and release the compounded self-anxiety. Sense the clinging and domination of the self actor (facial muscles and abdomen taut as well as thinking blurred). Allow greed, hatred and confusion to slowly disperse.

Awareness Penetration as concentration: Initial Contact settles on the breath's quality; Sustained Contact as an intensified Wise Reflection regards how thoughts form into speech; Interest discerns the will to speak; 'Joy' follows a Middle Way appreciation rather than a self-inclination; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a Preliminary Speech awareness notes self-expression.

The Middle Way experience slowly matures as a Noble Truth wisdom recognition.

I make my speech happen. Too often I'm critical or nasty in how I speak. I must be aware of my every word and how I express myself.

August 8—Preliminary Action*

“Abstaining from taking life, from stealing, and from unchastity: This is called right action.” SN 45, 8

Purposeful action underscores all life. Nothing happens without reason, causes and effects. Self-directed careless actions or mindful, responsible actions can be followed—self-impulsive vs. Wisely Reflected. The Middle Way as conduct-virtue directs one to be aware of one’s actions. Wise Action limits suffering.

Settled and focused, follow as pressured impressions flash reflecting self-consumed habits. Deeds and actions all stem from a body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Greed as desiring, hatred as defensive and an aversion, and confusion as doubt and worry lead to compromising actions. Follow how intentions lead to pressured responses, then engage in careless deeds and actions. Hard-wired habitual directives are less about free will and more about compromising habits. Through Preliminary Action, intention’s role is recognized. Avoiding the extremes for indulgence or hostility, a Middle Way experience is followed without judgment or bias.

Feel the buildup of accumulated habits. Through the breath’s awareness note the stress, tension and pressure in the body as well as the mind (the two communicating and reflecting engaged self-involvement). Gently relax and release the compounded self-anxiety. Sense the clinging and domination of the self actor (facial muscles and abdomen taut as well as thinking blurred). Allow greed, hatred and confusion to slowly disperse.

The Five Wise Actions serve as a guidance for how to better live life—goodwill, generosity, truthfulness, compassion and sobriety. There are no short cuts. A sincere effort is made to offer goodwill; be generous and share with others; speak truthfully; have compassion rather than lustful domination; and sobriety as living responsibly rather than intoxicated. Life is made better through Wise Action. Always reflect and remember to treat others as you would like to be treated.

Awareness Penetration as Concentration: Initial Contact settles as a breath awareness; Sustained Contact as an intensified Wise Reflection regards how intentions form; Interest discerns the will to speak; ‘Joy’ follows a Middle Way

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appreciation rather than self-inclination; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a Preliminary Action notes self-expression.

The Middle Way experience matures as a Noble Truth wisdom recognition.

My actions reflect my intentions and my intentions reflect my actions. Life just doesn't happen. I make it happen.

August 9—Preliminary Livelihood*

“The abstaining, desisting, abstinence, avoidance of wrong livelihood of one developing the noble path whose mind is noble...” MN 117

Livelihood is how you engage and spend your time. Self-deceived game playing, seduction and fantasy lead one to crave and a suffering fallout. Preliminary Livelihood is grounded as a Wisely Reflected responsibility for thoughts, speech and actions.

Settling deeper into meditation and the breath’s recognition, below the level of calm that meditation allows, sense the driving conceit and restlessness limiting one as a self actor. Acknowledge how persisting dormant, active and transgressing habitual impulses fuel greed, hatred, confusion. Note how one is charged and driven as a self actor. Physical tension and a confused attention mask the underlying self-associated dilemma and suffering fallout. Avoiding the extremes of indulgence and hostility, the Middle Way experience is without judgment, bias or attachment.

Not everything one does is beneficial or serves one well. You may delude yourself that recreational drug use is inconsequential, but how much better would you be sober? Time spent at the local bar, watching mindless TV shows, over indulging in food, drink or sex, are a distraction. Renunciation and restraint help know a simple happiness and peace in life. Work also reflects one’s well being; high-pressured, fast talking sales, looking for profits and rewards, all to fulfill a degree of status. Honest work is fruitful and joyful. Realized is where intentions are taking you.

Feel the buildup of accumulated habits. Through the breath’s awareness note the stress, tension and pressure in the body as well as the mind (the two communicating and reflecting engaged self-involvement). Gently relax and release the compounded self-anxiety. Sense the clinging and domination of the self actor (facial muscles and abdomen taut as well as thinking blurred). Allow greed, hatred and confusion to slowly disperse.

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Awareness Penetration as concentration: Initial Contact settles through the breath's awareness; Sustained Contact as an intensified Wise Reflection regards how intentions form; Interest discerns the will to act; 'Joy' is following a Middle Way appreciation rather than self-inclination; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a Preliminary Livelihood notes the self-expression.

The Middle Way experience matures as a Noble Truth wisdom recognition.

My recreation and job reflect my character and who I am as a person. The self actor doesn't have to dominate my life.

August 10—Preliminary Effort*

“There are these four exertions [efforts]. Which four? The exertion to guard, the exertion to abandon, the exertion to develop, and the exertion to maintain.”
AN 4, 14

Intention and effort overlap and share common ground, but where as intention directs the mind and attention, effort is the applied energy to engage and perform the intended action whether wholesome or unwholesome. Effort is the actual recognition to make changes, prevent and stop detrimental habits while promoting beneficial actions.

Engaged in Preliminary Effort, thoughts, speech and actions are monitored. Do they affect one or others adversely? If so stop from acting on the detrimental impulses, and if the motive is positive proceed with the responsible action. Note how craving’s urgency is stopped from escalating to suffering consequences. Should one slip up, acknowledge the faux pas to rejoin with the effort. Guard against too strong an effort leading to restlessness or being casual and falling back into laziness. Avoiding the extremes of indulgence and hostility, the Middle Way experience is without judgment, bias or attachment.

There are four corresponding, worldly-associated actions (vicissitudes): gain/loss; fame/dishonor; praise/blame; happiness/pain.

Fulfillment and wisdom come down to being happy and secure with who one is and the basic of needs. Follow a simple life creed of having sufficient food, clothing, shelter and medicine to live comfortably and not a life of excess.

Acknowledging intentions, sense the pressures to fulfill and satisfy a self-image. Greedily seeking, trying to please and be accepted, one isn’t honest and is left unfulfilled. Feel the exhaustion that is the worldly tug-of-war. Note the communication of stress between the body and mind as habit energies are a torment and compromise. Wisely Reflecting, self-indulged behavior is noted. Whatever the situation, moment or encounter, be patient and determined. Thoughts, speech, and actions align to reflect understanding and responsibility.

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Feel how detrimental habits cloud the mind as a self-deluded fog. Greed is an exhausting runaround, hatred makes for ill effects, and confusion is like being lost and confounded. Feel the effects on the body as well as how the mind narrows and is limited by a one-sided self-perspective.

Feel the buildup of accumulated habits. Through the breath's awareness note the stress, tension and pressure in the body as well as the mind (the two communicating and reflecting engaged self-involvement). Gently relax and release the compounded self-anxiety. Sense the clinging and domination of the self actor (facial muscles and abdomen taut as well as thinking blurred). Allow greed, hatred and confusion to slowly disperse.

Awareness Penetration as concentration: Initial Contact settles through the breath's awareness; Sustained Contact as an intensified Wise Reflection regards how intention forms; Interest discerns how intention engage as effort; 'Joy' follows a Middle Way appreciation rather than being self-inclined; and having One-Pointed Clarity as Preliminary Effort notes the self-expression.

The Middle Way experience matures as a Noble Truth wisdom recognition.

Everything I think, say and do requires effort. I choose to condone my habits or wisely engage in responsible actions.

August 11—Preliminary Awareness*

“And what is right mindfulness? There is the case where a monk remains focused on the body in and of itself—ardent, alert, and mindful—putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings in and of themselves...the mind in and of itself...mental qualities in and of themselves—ardent, alert, and mindful—putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world. This is called right mindfulness...” DN 22

Preliminary Awareness is grounded in four common experiences—the body (of which the breath is part) and material forms; feelings as pleasant, painful and neutral experiences; the mind, mental states and reactions; and life-action as phenomena life in general. Avoiding the extremes of indulgence and hostility, the Middle Way experience is without judgment, bias or attachment.

Awareness for the body: settled and focused, the breath’s quality reveals a charged biology. Follow as meditation directs as an appreciation and familiarity for the body. Wisely Reflecting, the body weakens and isn’t to be identified as self, but as an underlying insight for all moments and experiences as short-lived as well as of a non-self nature. The general areas of posture, walking, standing as well as lying down are dutifully noted. Through a Middle Way appreciation life is recognized as so many conditions arising rather than self-obsessed.

Awareness for feelings: Settled and focused, feelings arise with each and every moment as either pleasant, painful or neutral experiences. Wisely Reflecting as a witness and observer rather than attached as a self-actor to pleasant feelings, rejecting outright painful episodes, or ignoring neutral moments. Attentive rather than overwhelmed by sense-contacted impressions, view the arising and fading as short-lived as well as the non-self nature. Through a Middle Way appreciation life is recognized as so many conditions arising rather than self-obsessed.

Awareness for the mind, mental states and reactions: Settled and focused, through meditation judgments, bias as well as indifference are dropped to an understood realization without self-associated greed, hatred or confusion. Wisely Reflect on the short-lived nature of thoughts without indulging or being dominated by them as well as their non-self nature. Through a Middle Way appreciation life is recognized as so many conditions arising rather than self-obsessed.

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Awareness for life-action or phenomena: Settled and focused, one turns away from a self-perspective to note how life follows a purposeful action course, arising, fading and impermanent as well as of a non-self nature. Through a Middle Way appreciation life is recognized as so many conditions arising rather than self-obsessed.

Awareness Penetration as concentration: Initial Contact settles through the breath's awareness; Sustained Contact follows Wise Reflection as an intensified awareness; Interest discerns the body, feelings, mind and life-action; 'Joy' follows a Middle way appreciation rather than self-inclination; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a Preliminary Awareness notes the self-expression.

The Middle Way experience matures as a Noble Truth wisdom recognition.

Either I'm aware, take responsibility for my life or I blindly stumble ahead. I apply myself to be presently connected.

August 12—Preliminary Concentration*

“These are the four developments of concentration. Which four? There is the development of concentration that, when developed and pursued, leads to a pleasant abiding in the here and now. There is the development of concentration that, when developed and pursued, leads to the attainment of knowledge and vision. There is the development of concentration that, when developed and pursued, leads to mindfulness and alertness. There is the development of concentration that, when developed and pursued, leads to the ending of the effluents.” AN 4, 41

Greed, hatred and confusion are a limited self-focus—life as an I, me, mine justification. Craving as delight and pleasure leads to suffering consequences. A whirlwind of sense-contacted impressions, renunciation and restraint help subdue Monkey Mind distractions to not be taken in by the self extremes for indulgence or hostility. Equanimity stands out. With conduct-virtue in check and responsible, one is able to concentrate and discern the deeper role involving intentions. Preliminary Concentration sees the role of self-inspired actions, but has yet to connect with the Noble Truths wisdom recognition.

Settled and focused, follow the breath’s quality. A clear, open awareness stands out. Self-promoting transgressions are temporarily subdued. Note how the mind settles to shift from a scattered self-confusion to a Wise Reflection for thoughts and actions. Self-conceit and the accompanying restlessness are quiet. Subconscious impulses held in check, a clear understanding of life emerges—impermanence, general dissatisfaction, and a non-self nature reflecting purposeful action.

Feel the buildup of accumulated habits. Through the breath’s awareness note the stress, tension and pressure in the body as well as the mind (the two communicating and reflecting engaged self-involvement). Gently relax and release the compounded self-anxiety. Sense the clinging and domination of the self actor (facial muscles and abdomen taut as well as thinking blurred). Allow greed, hatred and confusion to slowly disperse.

Awareness Penetration as concentration: Initial Contact settles through the breath’s awareness; Sustained Contact as an intensified Wise Reflection notes self impulses; Interest discerns self-involvement and the associated Conditions Arising; ‘Joy’

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follows a Middle Way appreciation rather than a self-inclination; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a Preliminary Concentration notes the self-expression.

The Middle Way experience matures as a Noble Truth wisdom recognition.

My lack of focus or to be settled derails me. I'm easily taken in and distracted. Now I'm able to go deeper to see life as it is rather than as a self-experience.

August 13—The Middle Way Right Understanding*

“When, friends, a noble disciple understands suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the way leading to the cessation of suffering, in that way he is one of right view...” MN 9

Insight-wisdom as the first of the three Middle Way factors is a necessary and critical realization. Wise Understanding and Wise Intention direct one on the Middle Way Path to know what one is dealing with and how to approach the situation. Life and reality are revealed as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Put in proper perspective, a right course of action is followed. Along with conduct-virtue (speech, action and livelihood) and meditation-concentration (effort, awareness and concentration), the Middle Way addresses and brings suffering to an end.

Misunderstanding, life is categorized as eternal or not existing (death as annihilation). Missed completely is the relationship of multiple factors giving the illusion of the ‘one.’ Self-promoted thoughts and actions form and are engaged. Wisely regarding life, self-divisiveness clears. The Middle Way emphasizes Wise Understanding as a correct starting point. The Four Noble Truths as clarifying insight are the essential foundation. Revealed is a self-obsession and how a self-view is projected onto everything.

Connecting as a settled awareness for the breath’s quality, acknowledge the body’s stress, tension and pressures. Relax the facial muscles, drop the shoulders as well as relax abdominal and pelvic areas. Recognize the body/mind association for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention). Detaching from the Five Groups, feel as the habitual buildup disperses and Wise Reflection for the Noble Truths as clarifying insight stands out. Driven by impulsive tendencies, the subconscious (dormant, active and transgressing) potentials are revealed. Realize how self-intention springs into action to join up with craving as a delight and pleasure for desire, a self-identity, or to escape. Sense how craving’s urgency is momentarily subdued. Follow as respiration changes from long and heavy to shorter relaxed breaths lower in the diaphragm. The mind naturally settles to a Wise Reflection.

Wise Understanding isn’t an intellectual endeavor, but rather a genuine appreciation for life. Settled and focused, reflect inwardly as a personal recognition. Renunciation and restraint have the added affect of establishing detachment and a

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grounded awareness to not be taken in by sense-stimulated distractions. Follow the emerging Noble Truth intuition clarifying life. Self-consumed ups and downs are realized. As a Middle Way appreciation life is recognized as so many Conditions Arising rather than self-related. A self-absorbed person isn't able to have insight. Patience and Wise Reflection mature to a Noble Truth clarifying insight.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath, body, feelings and mental states; Sustained Contact recognizes the breath as self-stressed; Interest as a non-self appreciation stands out and self-obsession is released; 'Joy' discerns the cessation and release of dormant, active and transgressing habits; and having One-Pointed Clarity experiences the Noble Truth Wise Understanding for non-self and the Conditions Arising cycle as a Proper Wisdom realization.

The Middle Way Guidance of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom joins as wisdom clarification. Discerning the true nature of life and reality, self-suffering goes on to cease.

The Middle Way directs me to Wise Understanding. My body/mind self-attachment is dropped. I recognize the Noble Truths vision and insight.

August 14—Wise Understanding's Direction*

“When, friends, a noble disciple understands the unwholesome [actions], the root of the unwholesome [actions], the wholesome [actions], and the root of the wholesome [actions], in that way he is one of right view, whose view is straight,” MN 9

Wise Understanding puts into place the wisdom foundation that culminates in deliverance. Not understanding or truly realizing life and reality, one is trapped by a self-perception and suffers accordingly, struggling in vain to uphold a self-image. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention) are mistaken as self, when in fact multiple actions join in giving the illusion of the ‘one’ Conditions Arising causes and effects. Through a distorted self-identification a one-sided view is followed. Feel as the breath constricts with self-expectations and compromising habits. Follow as you slowly move from a self-upheaval to a Middle Way appreciation without self extremes. The body relaxes and the mind settles as a Wise Reflection. The Noble Truths Clarifying insight is personally recognized and experienced.

Now wisely understanding, penetrate the self-illusion surrounding the body/mind obsession. Long standing habits flash and come to mind. Craving after as delight and pleasure seeks desire, a self-identity or to escape. Misunderstanding then leads to a compromising downfall of greed, hatred and confusion. Thoughts, speech and actions go on to produce self-related suffering consequences.

Settled and focused on the breath quality, the body and mind follow to be relaxed. Feel the refined breath quality connected with Wise Understanding. Distractions and restless provocations as dormant, active and transgressing habits are neutralized. Follow as Wise Reflection penetrates the self-hoax. Through the experience of Insight Meditation and a Middle Way appreciation, you are aware, understanding, and have a recognition for Wise Understanding emphasizing the Four Noble Truths: the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention) bring one to suffering; played out through the Conditions Arising cycle, craving as delight and pleasure is the link to continued suffering; craving ceasing, suffering ends; and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

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Like cultivating a seedling, through Wise Understanding the Middle Way factors take root to blossom. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation have prepared you. Dealing with self on a basic level related to actions, but the Four Truths require complete honesty to once and for all end self-attachments and associations. The self-charade ends through craving's cessation.

Feel the toll of upset, conflict and stress self has made of your life and how conditions are played out. The Noble Truths bring are a clarifying insight. Slowly breaking from careless self-associations, experience the non-self insight and freedom. Wisely Reflecting, whether viewing and considering the Five Groups internally or through their external sources, all arise and fade as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements. There is no unique self-identity.

Not to be identified, delighted in or pursued as a past, present or future self-reference, one isn't measured or defined by the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Follow as dominating habits release and disperse.

Awareness penetration as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath, body, feelings and mental states; Sustained Contact connects with the breath's quality self-stress; Interest allows the Self Actor pressure to relax and disperse; 'Joy' turns from self extremes to the Middle Way Wise Understanding; and having One-Pointed Clarity discerns the Noble Truth clarifying insight for Conditions Arising actions.

Wise Understanding turns me away from my self-mania to see the true nature of life and reality.

August 15—Misunderstanding's Downfall*

“...a thicket of understandings, a wilderness of understandings, a contortion of understandings, a writhing of understandings, a fetter of understandings. Bound by a fetter of understandings, the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person is not freed from suffering.” MN 2

Self is a hindrance not realizing life's true nature as non-self underscored by purposeful action. Thinking and understanding are misdirected by a self-obsession. The impermanent is taken to be permanent, the dissatisfying to be fulfilling, and what is non-self to be self. The self actor acts through greed, hatred and confusion. Craving as a delight and pleasure leads to suffering consequences. Self-deception plays out as an ongoing tragedy.

Six distorted views stand out: the misunderstanding for a self or not having a self; the view I have no self; thinking that perceives things as self or assuming that through self not-self is perceived; the thinking that by means of self not-self is perceived; presuming that it is precisely by means of not-self that self arises; or else the misperception for an immortal self-character or soul.

While all of this may seem too much and a minor quibbling, what it comes down to in plain and simple terms is how self-delusion misleads, compromises and leads to suffering. For example, even the simple indulgence for a piece of chocolate is self-related, seeking to satisfy a desire while if failing then a suffering backlash is experienced. Acknowledge how self-conceit keeps one restless, impulsive and dominated by habits. Craving as delight and pleasure then carries over as desire, for a self-identity or as an escape.

Self-related extremes are tormenting—wrong views, habits, craving and attachments. Not discerned is life as conditions connected through purposeful action. Conditions Arising causes and effects (the many actions in the 'one'), self-intentions have far reaching consequences. All other understandings, views, experiences and practices are self-directed, supporting and upholding some degree of self-delusion. The Four Noble Truths insight is a Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

Settled and focused as a breath awareness, note how the subconscious monologue has quieted and craving is temporarily subdued. The Noble Truths Wise Understanding is recognized—self is suffering; clung to is a body/mind association and craving after; craving stopped, suffering ends; the Middle Way guidance is

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followed to deliverance. As a Wise Understanding recognize self's beguiling trappings and begin to release misunderstanding's hold. Feel the relief as one emerges from a distracted self-domination to clarifying insight.

Awareness Penetrations as insight: Initial Contact senses how the breath's quality and attention narrows around a self-notion; Sustained Contact acknowledges the attachment to a body/mind identification; Interest as non-self realization; 'Joy' follows the Noble Truth insight, well-being and release from self; and having One-Pointed Clarity the Noble Truth recognition for suffering's end stands out.

All too fond, I crave to fulfill a self-ideal. Now a Wise Understanding is coming into focus.

August 16—Wise Intention*

“And what is right intention? Being resolved on renunciation [for desire], on freedom from ill will, on harmlessness...” SN 45, 8

Wise Intention builds on the Noble Truths Wise Understanding foundation. The Middle Way is followed as a grounded insight experience freeing one from self-attachment. A liberating recognition slowly emerges.

Wise Intention connects with the mental dialogue and subconscious motives to think, speak and act. This is where karma as intention forms. Unfortunately a mistaken body/mind identification is followed. Having Wise Understanding, distinguished are careless self-intentions and the Middle Way’s Wise Intention. It is here at this deeper dormant level that self-bias and desires fester to then flare up and dominate. The thought before the thought or action, self-directed intentions join with craving to engage in self-promoted actions. Wise Intention forms as recognition: renunciation for greed (control over the senses); goodwill curbing ill will; and compassion transforming harmfulness.

Somewhat like a computer hard drive, the subconscious is reformatted—from self-corrupted to a cleaned and expanded wisdom capacity. However, don’t reestablish non-self as another version of self, but rather as total release from self-defined actions. Not coveting or jealous, caring stands out. No animosity is held, nor is cruelty, aggression or hostility shown.

A volcano-like analogy helps understand how motives erupt as dormant, active and transgressing habits.

Dormant—Habit potentials persist as latent or deep-seated. The dormant stage is deceptive as desire hasn’t been controlled and can erupt at anytime to wreck havoc on life. Here the subconscious self-relationship is revealed. Through a Middle Way appreciation, the self-charade is discerned and how craving leads to future consequences.

Active—Habits come to mind as impulsively charged choices and potentials. Renunciation and restraint are applied along with the intention to think, speak and act responsibly.

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Transgressing—Here self-intentions are actively expressed. Habits go on to join with craving and have suffering consequences.

Through Wise Intention one is motivated to have renunciation, goodwill, and compassion. Wisely Reflecting, the Noble Truths clarifying insight is realized. A personal recognition, self is seen as a handicap. Everyone wants to be happy and fulfilled, however self-deception makes it more challenging for less experienced persons than others who are further along on the Middle Way Path. Renouncing greed, hatred and harming, having patience while caring, along with goodwill are shared.

Settled and focused, recognize the mental monologue. Here is where karma as intention forms. A body/mind identification as an all-consuming obsession, recognize how images flash and voices chatter to then form as self-expressed intentions.

Note how self-intention is restless, worried, defensive, seeking and desiring. Feel how the breath's quality is stressed and constricted. Expectations are physically stressful and mentally harmful as suffocating pressures. Acknowledge how one's attention narrows to form around a self-association. The body/mind identification is unnerving.

Gently allow the self-accumulated habits to disperse. Feel how the self-motivated dialogue is unsettling. An electric-like charge, one's whole being is under high-voltage stress. Nervous breakdowns, depression, impatience, anger and emotional outbursts are overwhelming. The Middle Way Path distinguishes the Noble Truths twofold knowledge and release; from self-consumed to a non-self freedom and deliverance. Follow the relief from self-promoted intentions and actions.

Calmly appreciate the divisiveness caused by self extremes. Feel how the breath's quality, physical state as well as attention clears and relaxes from self-association. Normally self is all consuming, but through Wise Intention subconscious habits are controlled and subdued. Sensual gratification, ill will, and harming are disengaged.

Wise Intention connects me with my motives and directs me away from self-domination.

August 17—The Intention of Renunciation (not to desire)*

“Intention of Renunciation [for desire, greed and lust]...” SN 45, 8

Distracted and overwhelmed by unnecessary involvements and experiences, as a self actor one literally jumps and reacts with every sense-contacted action that comes one's way. Intentions then become misguided (craving as delight and pleasure after desire, for a self-identity or to escape). As a body/mind identification, the six senses are all-consuming reference points. Through a Middle Way appreciation and Noble Truth recognition, Wise Intention gives way to renunciation and restraint rather than desire.

Renunciation is often misunderstood. As a Middle Way experience, renunciation is applied as an intention or forethought to prevent sensory stimulation from escalating to sensual desire. Eyes/forms, ears/sounds, nose/scents, tongue/tastes, and tactile/touch—each sense contacted impression is a separate action mistaken as a self-related experience. Responsible and discerning, cultivating Wise Intention as an intuition for life, a Middle Way appreciation brings control to subconscious dominating habitual impulses.

Breathe deeply 5-7 times to establish a present connected awareness. Motives or intentions as the thought before the thought or action are nothing more than habitually surging impulses. Feel the physical tension passing through the body while the attention narrows to a self-defined association. As a Wise Reflection, note how stress disperses through a Middle Way observation. Through Wise Intention the subconscious dialogue is positively dealt with. As a Noble Truth recognition, follow how desire arises from conditioned forming impulses.

Self-intentions swirl around, flash and whisper softly, seeking an outlet. Desire is a dizzying reaction, affecting one physically as anxious stress. Breathing is labored, blood pressure rises and adrenaline increases. Sense-contacted impressions are overwhelming. Slowly relax. Following the breath's quality, feel how everyday distractions and habits dominate. Attention slowly settling as concentration, note the relief as desire disperses and flows out.

Wisely Reflecting, acknowledge the affect intentions have on life. Acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing subconscious flow of desire forming as a self-promoted action. Settling in concentrated awareness, feel the emergence of patience to then go on and have control over thoughts, intentions and actions. Self-

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focus waning, note how perception softens through renunciation. Desire disperses. The run away self-obsession curbed and craving as a delight and pleasure is mindfully prevented. A Middle Way appreciation stands out. Guarding one's awareness, renunciation and restraint are a reasonable way to live simply, honestly, and responsibly. As a Noble Truth recognition, discern the non-self insight and the Conditions Arising forming life-actions.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact feels how desired intention is unsettling (breathing strained, facial muscles tight, jaw clenched and strain around the eyes while having abdominal and pelvic tension) and attention is distracted; Sustained Contact follows the desired passing friction; Interest begins to relax and release desire's grip; 'Joy' turns away to follow the Middle Way guidance for renunciation; and having One-Pointed Clarity notes as Wise Intention affects the subconscious self-related turmoil.

Life just doesn't happen, but begins as an intention. I see how my motives direct me. The Noble Truths are a Wise Understanding.

August 18—The Intention of Goodwill (not to have ill will)*

“Intention of harmlessness [as goodwill]...” SN 45, 8

Goodwill is a respect for others as well as all life in general. Offered are kindness, concern and respect. Separating from a self view, hatred as a motivation doesn't arise. Living in cooperation as an open communication and peaceful offering, the adage to treat others as you would want to be treated is the Golden Rule. Wise Intention gives way to goodwill rather than ill will.

Ill will is like an unsettling storm. The consequences are bad feelings, frustration, aversion and rancor raging as enmity. Feel the physical turmoil as the heart pounds, head throbs, breathing is labored, blood pressure rises, and adrenaline races through the body. Note how thoughts painfully narrow. Anger is suffocating and stifling. Acknowledge how one is derailed by hatred. Note how distractions, habits, impulsive behavior, and self-reactions dominate. Follow how inconvenience and frustration turn to dislike and aggression.

Be patient. Follow the breath's quality and also how the body recoils as the breath sputters in short, tense gasps. Connected with the present breath quality, awareness weakens ill will. An intuitive Middle Way appreciation not indulging or aggressive takes over. Slowly released is ill will's charge.

Follow the reaction of ongoing negative thoughts. When experiences and people aren't to one's liking, ill will springs into action. Frowned upon is anyone or anything that gets in the way. The present becomes a battleground.

Aware that concentration has lapsed, refocus to connect with the breath's quality. Feel how the breath is labored while tension increases at the forehead. Temples pounding, mouth dry, a constricting pressure at the chest, stomach sour, blood pressure and pulse rates soar. Jolting like painful electric shocks, acknowledge how you are your own worst enemy and how detrimental anger is to one's general well-being. Anxious and out of control, a self-identification dominates, feeling threatened, insecure and unsettled. Open to patience, acceptance and goodwill. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way turn to wholesome and wise experiences. Now relax, defusing the habitual conflict.

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Breathe deeply 5-7 times to establish a present connected awareness. Motives or intentions as the thought before the thought or action are nothing more than habitually surging impulses. Feel the physical tension passing over the body while the mind narrows to a defined self-association. As a Wise Reflection, feel how the stress disperses through a Middle Way observation. Through Wise Intention the subconscious mental dialogue is recognized and then to positively deal with the challenging situation. As a Noble Truth recognition, follow how ill will arises from conditioned forming impulses.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact feels how the intention of ill will unsettling (breathing labored, facial muscles tight, jaw clenched and strain around the eyes while having abdominal and pelvic tension) and attention narrows; Sustained Contact follows the negative energy; Interest begins to relax and release ill will's affect; 'Joy' turns away to follow the Middle Way guidance for good will; and having One-Pointed Clarity notes as Wise Intention affects the subconscious self-related turmoil.

I see how anger forms around my self-association when I feel threatened, inconvenienced and defensive. Through Wise Intention I connect with goodwill and wisely direct my motives.

August 19—The Intention of Compassion (not to harm)*

“Right Intention of non-ill [not to harm]...” SN 45, 8

Harming or harmfulness is a self-indignant reaction. When self doesn't get its way, animosity and harm spring up. It is enraging when Humpty Dumpty gets knocked over and looses out, seeking to do away with whatever or whoever is in the way. Feel the indignation and rage. Heart pounding, head throbbing, breathing labored, blood pressure rising, and adrenaline racing, Wise Intention gives way to compassion rather than harming.

Settled and focused, acknowledge how ill will is vexing. Feel how when inconvenienced and challenged, frustration and rage appear. Acknowledge the first impulse as expectations to dislike and deal out of a self-righteous aggression. There is the obvious stress of the breath's quality as well as physical tension and even pain. Follow how the discomfort is amplified by a self-presumption. Ill will subconsciously comes out through a self-attachment. Gently allow the habitual buildup to disperse as well as the anger and indignation to flow out. Craving for delight and pleasure (or the lack there of!) leads to suffering.

Acknowledge how harming gives way to aggressive reactions. Note how the mind flits about. Sense the body and the more obvious signs of racing heart, twitching muscles, facial tension, dry lips and abdominal pressure while hands fidget or close into fists and a foot taps nervously. As a Wise Reflection, feel how the stress disperses through a Middle Way observation. Through Wise Intention connect with the subconscious mental dialogue to positively deal with the challenging situation. As a Noble Truth recognition, follow how harmfulness arises from conditioned impulses.

Compassion is often mistaken as a weakness. But to the contrary, compassion is nurturing, healing and brings rightful closure to difficult and challenging experiences. Everyone is treated the same without judgment or preference. Harming is detrimental and self engaged in its affects while compassion is open, accepting, caring, responsible and even tempered. As a Middle Way appreciation, Wise Intention gives way to compassion rather than harming.

Self-intention swirls around, flashes and whispers softly, seeking an outlet. Harmfulness is a suffocating reaction, affecting a physical painful stress. Slowly

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relax. Feel how everyday distractions and habits dominate. Follow the breath's quality. Mind settling, feel the relief as harmfulness disperses and flows out.

Breathe deeply 5-7 times to establish a present connected awareness. Motives or intention as the thought before the thought or action are nothing more than surging habitual impulses. Feel the physical tension passing over the body while attention narrows to a defined self-association. As a Wise Reflection, feel how the stress disperses through a Middle Way observation. Through Wise Intention connect with the subconscious mental dialogue to positively deal with the challenging situation. As a Noble Truth recognition, follow how ill will arises from conditioned forming impulses.

Wisely Reflecting, acknowledge the role intentions have on life. Note the dormant, active and transgressing subconscious flow of harmfulness as a self-promoted action. Settling in concentrated awareness, feel the emergence of patience. Control is taken over thoughts to direct intentions and actions. Self-focus waning, note how perception softens through compassion. Harming disperses. A run away self-obsessed imagination is curbed and harm prevented. A Middle Way appreciation stands out. Guarding awareness, compassion is a reasonable way to live simply, honestly, and responsibly. As a Noble Truth recognition, follow how harm arises from conditioned forming impulses.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact feels how harmful intentions are unsettling (the breath suffocating, facial muscles tight, jaw clenched and strain around the eyes while having abdominal and pelvic tension) and attention disturbed; Sustained Contact follows how the upsetting friction passes; Interest is beginning to relax and to release harm's grip physically as well as mentally; 'Joy' turns away to follow the Middle Way guidance for compassion; and having One-Pointed Clarity notes as Wise Intention the affecting subconscious self-related turmoil.

Temper tantrums, raging, crying, never to be happy, self is harmful. This much I know.

August 20—Intentions and the Worldly Ways*

“When a [person] dwells without restraint over the faculty of the intellect, the mind is stained with ideas cognizable via the intellect. When the mind is stained, there is no joy. There being no joy, there is no rapture. There being no rapture, there is no serenity. There being no serenity, he dwells in suffering. The mind of one who suffers does not become centered. When the mind is uncentered, phenomena don't become manifest. When phenomena aren't manifest, one is classed simply as one who dwells in heedlessness.” SN 35, 97

Self-promoted intentions are like a roller coaster ride through gain/loss, fame/dishonor, praise/blame, and happiness/pain. One can never be fulfilled and is a victim of self-deception. Misguided motives bring about the ups and downs in life. Worldly pursuits play out as a dissatisfying self-fulfillment. The Middle Way appreciation turns away from and avoids all self-related extremes for indulgence and hostility.

Settled and focused, connect with the ongoing mental dialogue. Follow how a self-affinity forms around subconscious dormant, active and transgressing habits. Wisely Reflecting, note when you are distracted and reconnect with the Middle Way.

Gain and Loss—Gain is driven by a self desire emerging from the subconscious. But no matter how enjoyable, loss takes a toll. Life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, a non-self impersonal nature stands out. Gain joins with craving as a delight and pleasure to create future suffering consequences.

Applying the Wise Intention of renunciation for desire affirms awareness and understanding. Recognized are how motives go on to prompt actions.

Fame and Dishonor—Fame is all about pride, trying to reward and uphold a self-illusion. Dishonor has a negative affect. Life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, a non-self impersonal nature stands out. Fame joins with craving as a delight and pleasure to create future suffering consequences.

Applying the Wise Intentions of both renunciation and goodwill affirms one's awareness and understanding. Recognized are how motives go on to prompt actions.

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Praise and Blame—Praise is ego inflating while blame crushes one's personal image. Praise is soothing and welcomed; blame is threatening and to be avoided. Life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, a non-self impersonal nature stands out. Praise joins with craving as a delight and pleasure to create future suffering consequences.

Applying the Wise Intention of compassion affirms one's awareness and understanding. Recognized are how motives go on to prompt actions.

Happiness and Pain—The self actor seeks creature comforts and a secure setting. However, there are always setbacks and disappointments. Swinging from gratified and fulfilled to challenged and tormented, both happiness and pain are experienced. Life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, a non-self impersonal nature stands out. Happiness joins with craving as a delight and pleasure to create future suffering consequences.

Applying the Wise Intention of renunciation and goodwill affirms one's awareness and understanding. Recognized are how motives go on to prompt actions.

Follow the breath's quality. Note how habitual promotions arise as flashing images and a chattering monologue. Self-deception is at suffering's root. Acknowledge the shift away from impulsive actions to Wise Reflection. Responsible conduct brings wisdom to life. Things are done with self approval and reward in mind. Before ever thinking, speaking or acting, subconscious habitual intentions or motives direct life. Craving quickly surges and leads to suffering. The mind is overwhelmed and charged by a body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Distinguish the ongoing physical tension as well as mental agitation. As a Middle Way appreciation not engaged in self extremes, slowly allow habits to disperse and release. Feel the relief as self-identification is dropped. Note as habitually pressured intentions play out as dormant, active and transgressing actions.

Worldly pursuits are an ongoing struggle and disappointment. Self antics are subtle and deceptive, but through the Noble Truth insight the self downfall is stopped. Self intentions keep one tied to the Conditions Arising causes and effects suffering cycle. Wise Reflection through the Four Noble Truths discerns a non-self reality. Renunciation, goodwill and compassion as Wise Intention affect subconscious habits and bring control for careless actions. As a deepening Noble Truth recognition, craving as a delight and pleasure is stopped.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges the stress and conflict associated with worldly pressures as labored breath and confused mental states; Sustained Contact notes the tug of war to fulfill a self idea; Interest slowly relaxes the worldly pressures; 'Joy' follows the Middle Way guidance away from self

extremes; and having One-Pointed Clarity the Noble Truth clarifying insight and associated conditions recognition stand out.

The worldly ways lead me in the wrong direction of self-related pursuits. The Middle Way experience of Wise Intention directs me away from habit-domination.

August 21—The Role of Wise Reflection within Intention *

“I will protect myself establishing awareness and practicing awareness; by practicing patience, harmlessness, loving kindness and sympathy...I protect others.” SN 5, 47 (19) 9

Know where intentions are leading you. Applying Wise Intention, the underlying motives behind one’s actions becomes clear. Subconscious habits and self-attachments are revealed. Trouble sleeping, nervousness, impatience, having a quick temper, indecisive and on edge, or confused and frightened, reflect a self-directed life. Wise Intention deepens to promote confidence, responsibility and understanding. Wisely Reflecting one is sensitive and aware.

Through a Middle Way appreciation, the present moment is a personal recognition. Wisely Reflecting, recognize the affecting stress (facial tension, abdominal pressures as well as mental states). Previously neglectful, life is now understood. Taking a few deep breaths through the nose helps to settle down. The Noble Truths wisdom as a distinguishing insight is a release from suffering.

Connecting with the breath’s quality, acknowledge the tension, upset or frustration felt as well as embroiling thoughts. Through a body scan stress is relaxed (allow the jaw to unclench, chin to drop down slightly taking strain off the neck, and gently go on to relax abdominal and pelvic muscles.) Note how the mind narrows, is tense and gripped by a self-associated attachment. Acknowledge how subconscious thoughts flash as well as the echoing monologue in the mind. Here intention as karma is discerned, the thought before the thought or action. Feel how self-related intentions for desire, hatred and harming are a compelling habitual urgency. Sense how a self-defined potential pushes forward. Dormant, active or transgressing habits go on to affect thoughts, speech and actions.

Breath deeply 5-7 times. Wisely Reflecting, appreciate the self-obsession. All day long self seeks favor, expression and craves. Sense how habits and accompanying antics are a torment. Directed by Wise Reflection, one connects with the Noble Truths clarifying insight. The Middle Way Path through conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, insight-wisdom is followed. No longer actively supporting the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification, craving as delight and pleasure isn’t engaged. Recognize the relief from suffering.

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Follow the shift as an emptying release from self-experiences. Wise Intention as renunciation, goodwill and compassion stand out. Self-accumulated habits disperse. Wise Intention naturally gives way to the Middle Way Right Action of speech, action and livelihood.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact settles to distinguish the subconscious and intention's role (the thought before the thought); Sustained Contact discerns the flashing and ongoing mental dialogue of the self actor; Interest feels how habits and motives urge one to action, eventually joining with craving and to suffer; 'Joy' slowly calms the distracting mental disturbances to apply Wise Reflection for intentions as a Middle Way guidance; and having One-Pointed Clarity the Noble Truth clarifying insight and associated conditions recognition stand out.

Wisely Reflecting on my actions, I understand, realize and stop my habits from getting the better of me. I'm aware of what I'm thinking, saying and doing.

August 22—The Middle Way Right Action*

“One tries to abandon wrong action and to enter into right action: This is one’s right effort. One is mindful to abandon wrong action and to enter and remain in right action: This is one’s right mindfulness. Thus these three qualities — right view, right effort and right mindfulness — run and circle around right action.” MN 117

The Middle Way emphasizes a Right Action conduct-virtue as disciplined control for habits, actively curbing transgressing actions from being acted on and taking place. Wise Speech, Wise Action and Wise Livelihood help rein in subconscious driven intentions escalating to craving. More than censorship, conduct-virtue as a Right Action follows the Noble Truth recognition ending self-obsession. With all life as action related and following Conditions Arising causes and effects as purposeful action, Right Action is applied and exercised. The Five Wise actions bring a basic control, responsibility and appreciation for life, but the Middle Way guidance follows the Noble Truths insights to Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

Wise Speech—As a realized intent, Wise Speech expresses forethought in and for how language is used and communicated. Everyday speech is charged and dominated by a one-sided, self-expression. The thought before the thought or action, words are carelessly blurted out. Forgiveness is sought and apologies made when understanding and control are first needed.

Wise Action—As a realized intent, Wise Action expresses forethought for one’s actions and conduct. Rather than desiring, hateful or harming, reflecting before and accountability are emphasized before acting.

Wise Livelihood—As a realized intent, Wise Livelihood expresses forethought for how one lives and engages in responsible livelihood. The ultimate career is following and applying the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path ending suffering.

Five Wise Actions (or precepts) reshape life from a careless and impulsive self actor to being conscious, responsible and having wise action. Life as purposeful rather than careless and habitually driven stands out. Having goodwill for how one lives and relates to others (in contrast to ill will or hatred), honest and truthful speech as communication (in contrast to lies, gossiping and frivolous speech), sexual responsibility, abstinence and compassion (in contrast to lust and carnal indulgence), and sobriety (in contrast to alcohol and drug use). Not a censorship or

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a superior-than-thou attitude, the Five Wise Actions reveal the underlying motives compelling one's actions. Subconscious habitual tendencies are exposed, directly known, engaged and brought under control.

Acknowledge the physical tension (facial stress and torso) as well as how the mind and thoughts are strained. Settling down, connect with patience and goodwill. Meditation is an intuitive experience bringing a wholesome perspective for life and pointing one in the right direction. Through the breath's awareness and Middle Way appreciation, the self-consuming burden is released.

The affects of Wise Action are twofold—not only going on to bring control to life and acknowledging responsibility for what is done, but also how actions on a broader level go on to affect others.

The Middle Way Right Action is a call to recognize and understanding my actions. I can't let my guard down for a moment. It's sobering to know that I can control and stop my habit-domination as well as positively affect others. Right Action is the key.

August 23—Wise Speech*

“Abstinence from false speech, abstinence from malicious speech, abstinence from harsh speech, abstinence from idle chatter: this is called Right Speech.”
SN 45, 8

Wise Speech builds on the Noble Truths Wise Understanding foundation. The Middle Way is followed as a grounded insight experience freeing one from self-attachment. A liberating recognition slowly emerges.

A distinct line that can be easily crossed as transgression—careless speech is self-upholding while Wise Speech is accountable and responsible with the deeper realization to end suffering. A joke may seem harmless but someone may be offended. A ‘white lie’ appears inconsequential but is misleading. Gossip is one-sided and a character assassination. Much more than wrong and right, Wise Speech reflects the role of Wise Intention. One thinks before speaking. Following the Middle Way Path, self-centered pitfalls are avoided. Clearly, intention is the forerunner behind speech whether to be truthful and not to slander, or as harsh speech to speak in anger, idle chatter, and gossip. Misspoken words often times do more harm than physical actions.

Follow how speech first comes forward to be spoken. Self-directed pressure builds, images stir and flash as a mental dialogue forms to express words, speech and conversation. Acknowledge how the self actor calculates, manipulates, and is deceptive with the goal to gain, control and dominate. Feel the stress over the face and body while thoughts compress to calculate, measure, and define a self-expression.

Breathe deeply to help relax and clear disturbed, self-directed impulses. Habits circle in the mind and thoughts form as motives to express self-intentions. Feel the physical charge to put to voice and express the habits of greed, hatred and harming. Sense the face as taut, throat constricted, lungs heaving as well as abdominal and pelvic tension. Mentally follow how habitual impulses sweep by forming as self-intention. You are less in control and more a victim of self-attachments. Words are carelessly blurted in order to defend and uphold a self-identity.

Allow Wise Intention as renunciation for desire, goodwill instead of hatred, and compassion rather than harm to pervade over you. Acknowledge how dormant habits emerge from past conditioned experiences. Feel how this self-related stress

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is a springboard for careless speech. The Middle Way guidance for Wise Speech is presently engaged as conduct-virtue to deal with transgressing habits and actions. With Wise Understanding as a foundation, craving is negated. Wisely directing speech, suffering is prevented.

As a Middle Way application, reflect on how each and every thought impression forms into words and expressions. Insight Meditation allows one to slow down, be accountable and take control. As a Wise Reflection, follow how intention is engaged on the dormant level, then the thought impression comes to consciousness on the active level to then be expressed as transgressing speech.

Through Wise Speech the Noble Truth insight is known—how conditions and actions arise, the ceasing of conditions and actions, and the Middle Way guidance followed releasing self-obsessed actions.

I see how self springs into action. My intentions form into words. I must be wiser to better deal with my actions. Wise Speech requires continuous awareness, effort and work.

August 24—The Five Qualities of Wise Speech*

“A statement endowed with five factors is well-spoken, not ill-spoken. It is blameless and unfaulted by knowledgeable people. Which five?...It is spoken at the right time. It is spoken in truth. It is spoken affectionately. It is spoken beneficially. It is spoken with a mind of good-will.” AN 5, 198

Wise Speech is centered around the five qualities of truthfulness, timing, caring, as being beneficial, and as goodwill. Rather than taken for granted, there is the deeper forethought and realization first for one’s intentions; from self-serving careless actions to Right Action for what is done. Living responsibly, craving is prevented from escalating to suffering levels. Clarifying, honest and directed as a Noble Truth insight, acknowledge how Wise Intention joins with Right Action in the present to form as Wise Speech.

Truthful Speech—When untruthful not only do you harm yourself but are seen as untrustworthy, are disengaged from reality, and caught up in self-delusion. Someone who is untruthful can never understand the Four Noble Truths or appreciate the Middle Way Path leading to suffering’s end.

Feel how one is physically unnerved when untruthful. Consumed with fabricating and conjuring up lies, the mind wildly exaggerates. Note how self-attachment as a misperception is bewildering and is a negative affect. Follow how speech is engaged by an underlying intention. The breath’s quality reveals self stress while the mind darts about. Self-expression is anything but reasonable, accurate or honest.

Now connecting with the intention to speak, note how the self actor shrinks and fades into the background as Right Action is engaged. The Middle Way guidance deepens as both a subconscious penetration as well as a present appreciated Middle Way discipline. Renunciation and restraint as a conduct-virtue have the added affect of preventing careless intentions from joining with craving to produce suffering consequences.

With clear intention for words as a Noble Truth recognition, speaking and dealing truthfully expresses Wise Reflection as a realized forethought—not to engage in or promote suffering speech.

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Timely Speech—Not just blurting out the first thought or making snide, off-the-cuff remarks, but speech is well thought out, reflective and considers one's surroundings, the moment as well as others. As a Middle Way conduct-virtue, Noble Silence and being a good listener are also valuable qualities relating to Wise Speech.

Settled and focused, thought patterns are followed as accountability for words and conversation. Acknowledge the Self Actor impulsiveness to go with the first impression. Self is all about gain, control, indulgence, aggression and superiority. All too quickly a self-foothold is sought, responding unjustly or harshly. As a Middle Way discipline, renunciation and restraint prevent careless intentions from joining with craving to produce suffering consequences. Through a maturing intuition honest speech is expressed. The intention not to engage or promote suffering speech is expressed.

Caring Speech—Measured and also considerate of others, Wise Speech is a genuine concern. Insight Meditation and the Middle Way are a practical emphasis and speech follows as direct, sensitive, generous and complimentary. Accountable for one's actions, you best serve others and the situation through caring and sensitive speech.

With Wise Intention as a key awareness, the role and affect of the subconscious is revealed (desiring, hateful or harming). Following a Middle Way guidance, self extremes for indulgence and hostility are avoided. Speech is measured and sensitive. With the clear intention for words as a Noble Truth recognition, caring speech expresses a present awareness and realized forethought not to engage in or promote suffering language.

Beneficial Speech—Positive and wholesome as well as accurate, constructive and healing, patience stands out. For one's own actions you are supremely aware and accountable while dealing with others one is considerate and relates to the person through fellowship and goodwill. Beneficial speech is open and settling in nature. As a Middle Way discipline words are positive and helpful.

Acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing habitual tendencies of careless speech. Settling in concentrated awareness, feel the emergence of patience and beneficial choices. Recognize how carelessness plunge one into impulsive thoughts, speech and actions. With the subconscious exposed, slowly feel the gradual shift to a Middle Way appreciation. As the self-focus softens, careless speech gives way to the Wise Action of Truthfulness. Feel as consciousness awareness opens to a clear attention. Sense the habitual buildup dispersing. Note how the urgency to respond as a self actor fades. Feel the relief from subconscious habits to a Middle Way appreciation as Wise Speech.

The centered tranquility of meditation practice goes on to be expressed in accurate and beneficial words. Feel as intentions clear from self-distracted and one-sided self-serving motives to a Middle Way appreciation. With consideration for words and speech, a conscious expression is shared. With habitual tendencies falling away, the Middle Way guidance for Right Action as discipline is experienced. With the clear intention for words as a Noble Truth recognition, beneficial words express the forethought not to engage in suffering behavior.

I think before I speak. My words are either impulsively spoken as a self actor or I Wisely Reflect on my conversation.

August 25—Wise Speech Qualities Continued*

“...It is spoken beneficially. It is spoken with a mind of good-will.” AN 5, 198

Goodwill in Speech—Removed from a self-consumed personal agenda, Wise Speech is soothing, caring and has the intention of words spoken in friendship and compassionately. No longer seeing others as a threat or the enemy, you have patience as well as goodwill, even for those people who are disagreeable. One’s body language and demeanor also reflect Wise Speech. Relaxed and aware, words are spoken in kindness. A smile breaks the tension while eyes shine in friendship. As a Middle Way noble discipline, speech is accurate and just.

The Middle Way appreciation opens the role motives play in life. Acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing habitual tendencies of careless speech. Settling in concentrated awareness, feel the emergence of patience and beneficial choices. Apply awareness to recognize how carelessness plunges one into impulsive thoughts, speech and actions. With the subconscious exposed, slowly feel the gradual shift to a Middle Way appreciation. As self-association abates, careless talk gives way to the Wise Action of goodwill in speech.

Before ever speaking a word, the thought as intention first comes to mind. Insight Meditation allows one to slow down and realize one’s actions. Settling into the meditation, connect with the Middle Way appreciation. Feel as consciousness awareness opens to a clear attention. Sense the habitual buildup dispersing. Note how the self actor urgency to respond fades. Feel the relief from subconscious habits to a Middle Way appreciation as Wise Speech.

Acknowledge how the self actor is judgmental, prone to sharp words, verbal attacks and put downs. Self-intention is stifling as pressure and tension over the body while conspiring to ulterior motives. Following the Middle Way discipline, renunciation and restraint go on to stop careless intentions from joining with craving to produce suffering consequences. With clear intention for words as a Noble Truth recognition, goodwill expresses a present awareness and realized forethought. Suffering speech isn’t engaged or promoted.

Taking control of one’s actions, feel how the self actor wanes. A Middle Way relief and understanding, life without self-reference is experienced. Wisely Reflecting, goodwill steers one away from painful consequences to responsible actions.

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Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges the will to speak; Sustained Contact is the intensifying of careless and impulsive habits forming; Interest reflects on how motives play a crucial role in directing and charging speech as a self actor; 'Joy' recognizes speech as a Middle Way Right Action guidance is applied; and having One-Pointed Clarity consciously channels the Middle Way Wise Speech.

What and how I speak is important. Reflected are my intentions. Words have a meaning and purpose as either carelessly and impulsive or wisely expressed. I must be accountable for my every word.

August 26—Lying*

“The person who lies, who transgresses in this one thing...there’s no evil he might not do.” IT 25

Lying (white lies as half a truth are nevertheless a lie!) is a gross distortion and distances one from reality and life in general. Reflected is a self actor who is destructive, vindictive, hateful as well as fearful while being the height of conceit and self-delusion. The truth is totally lost and the line crossed to suffering. There is no evil or wrong doing that a liar wouldn’t commit as friends and loved ones are betrayed. A lie snowballs into a destructive avalanche having long suffering consequences not only for one’s self but also for innocent parties involved. As both a Middle Way discipline and guidance, the Noble Truth recognition penetrates the underlying subconscious intention for self-promoted exaggeration.

Settled and focused, connect with the calm awareness. Distinguished from everyday stress, tension and distractions, Wise Reflection discerns the self-actor and subconscious intentions. As a Middle Way Appreciation, the self-charade is understood. Impulsive intentions as habitual reactions join with craving and lead to suffering consequences.

As a fire starts from a spark, acknowledge how a lie just as easily rages out of control to overtake good sense. A lie is self-promoting, seeks an advantage and expresses greed, hatred or confusion. Feel how the mere thought of a lie is actually repugnant and unsettling. The body reacts to tense up while the mind sours with the falsehood. A domino effect, note how the mind circles with dizzying images and plots scenarios. The subconscious monologue reaches a cacophony pitch. Lie begets lie to justify selfish ways. Note how the attention is wild and thrashes about as a struggle with the fiction.

Through a Middle Way guidance for Right Action, one turns away from the self extremes of indulgence and hostility. Renunciation for desire and restraint as self control follows a correct line of speech. Habits slowly dispersing, self-promoted actions are stopped from escalating to craving. Wise Reflection for speech as a Noble Truth recognition and the Middle Way guidance for conduct and virtue is followed.

Lies are like poison. I harm myself and suffer. The Middle Way is a revealing reflection and experience as I turn away from self.

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August 27—Wise Speech as Transforming*

“One should speak only that word by which one would not torment oneself nor harm others. That word is indeed well spoken.

“One should speak only pleasant words, words which are acceptable (to others). What one speaks without bringing evils to others is pleasant.” THAG 21

Through Wise Reflection for speech, one moves away from a self-directed focus of lying, falsehood, gossip, backstabbing and cruelty.

Wisely Reflection as a personal realization and forethought transforms Wise Speech in four areas: abstaining from false speech, abstaining from divisive speech, abstaining from abusive speech, and abstaining from idle chatter. Of course, what is really emphasized is responsibility and control for over self-consuming ways. Worldly indulgences, pressures and corruption are controlled through the Middle Way conduct-virtue.

Abstaining from false speech: If asked about something having no knowledge about, one truthfully replies that one doesn't know. In this way a conscious lie is avoided. This is how speech is engaged as truthful. It is better to keep Noble Silence when having nothing good to say.

Abstaining from divisive speech: Assumptions aren't made without any true knowledge of the situation, nor is speech shared in order to cause friction between people, but rather as a peace maker reconciling individuals. Speaking honestly and appropriately, words create accord.

Abstaining from abusive speech: Words and speech patterns are helpful, consoling, go to the heart of the matter, are polite, appealing and pleasing. Guided by moral maturity, speak only in a timely fashion what is factual. Words are reasonable and trusted.

Abstaining from idle chatter: Gossip, speculation or assumptions have no place in Wise Speech. Words aren't impulsively or foolishly spoken, but are thoughtfully chosen. It is the self actor who spreads gossip and seeks to harm.

The emphasis on having proper intention and consideration for words and speech reflect an aware, responsible and understood person, and not someone who is

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influenced by worldly pressures. Noble Silence is helpful and carries as much importance as words. Smile, radiate confidence and be at ease rather than give in to inaccurate or wrong speech. Don't gossip, seek to harm or prattle on about trivial issues. Nor does one scorn or have a superior-than-thou attitude. The truth is confidently shared and followed as a Middle Way guidance rather than following a suffering cycle.

Settled and focused, feel how the breath, body and attention are calm and at ease. The Noble Truths are a clarifying insight. Self-absorbed speech is narrow, restricted, stressed and leads to suffering. Note how craving's urgency subsides. As a Wise Reflection, acknowledge the shift as awareness opens to release and move away from self-upholding speech patterns.

My speech begins first as an intention leading me to an action. Following the Middle Way, I turn away from habitual domination. Wise Speech is transforming.

August 28—Wisely Reflecting on Your Speech*

“Whenever you want to speak, you should wisely reflect and consider what you are about to say: will my speech lead to my affliction, will my speech lead to the affliction of others, or to both parties? If so then my speech is unfit to speak. But if on reflection you know that it wouldn’t cause affliction, is beneficial with positive consequences and good results, then you may speak.

“Having spoken you should reflect if what you said leads to your own affliction, to that of others, or to both; then it was an unskillful verbal act with painful consequences, painful results, then you should acknowledge remorse.

“You should exercise restraint in your speech for the future but if you reflect on your speech as skillful, you should stay mentally refreshed and joyful and practice in such a way.” MN 61

Settled and focused, connect with willed actions through Wise Intention. Wisely Reflecting, be responsible for your speech. Forming as a self-expression, revealed are how habits dominate word usage. Acknowledge the flashing images, discursive monologue and underlying urgency as karma forms verbally. Reflected in speech is the mental state as intention—careless and impulsive or concerned, well chosen and responsible.

Unsettled and nervous, talking for many people is an incessant chatter. Interest in the latest fashion, cars, movies and Hollywood gossip, sports, websites interests and sales, or news headlines and political wrangling, keep one tied to a distracting self-agenda. Through a Middle Way guidance casual and frivolous speech is abstained from. Wise Speech is aligned with the Noble Truth insight for non-self ending suffering. Noble Silence is the Golden Rule. With nothing pertinent, appropriate, honest, kind or beneficial to say, one abides quietly. Worthy topics of conversation are: talk on humility, simple contentment, having patience, charity, on virtue, lessons learned, seclusion and meditation, discernment and insight, and on personal realization.

Acknowledge the breath’s quality, physical stress and the mental tension absorbing the self actor. Note the mental dialogue and affecting habits. Feel the self-related stress. Desire is impulsive, hatred defensive and prone to lashing out, and confusion is worrisome and tormenting. Feel how habits narrow to be expressed habits then link up with craving as delight and pleasure (or as a struggle to uphold

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delight and pleasure!), go on to speak and act impulsively. Having restraint rather than blurting things out, words are appropriately chosen words.

Acknowledge the inaccuracy and damage done through lax words and comments. It is right to have remorse and apologize for wrong speech. Learn not to repeat the infraction again. Think of how you would want to be spoken to. Recognize how habits and craving dominate. One is either careless or directed by a Noble Truth recognition and Middle Way guidance. Wise Speech is timely, truthful, helpful, considerate and spoken as kindness. Control and a personal intuition for thoughts and speech is applied.

Before every judging, thinking badly or reprimanding someone, consider your own thoughts, speech and actions. Are one's actions blameless and beyond reproach? Is one's speech just and impeccable? Is goodwill shared? Are you free from malice and accepting of others? Do you follow what you preach? Are you aware, considerate, open, generous and accepting? Do you follow the Middle Way guidance as conduct-virtue to higher knowledge and Noble Truth realization, or are you distracted and dominated as a self actor?

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges the intention to speak; Sustained Contact notes the thought forming as self-expressed greed, ill will or harming; Interest notes the spoken impulse arising to be voiced; 'Joy' knows the thought to be spoken as careless and having the wisdom recognition to redirect the thought as Wise Intention for renunciation, goodwill or compassion; and having One-Pointed Clarity is the Noble Truth clarifying insight, having followed the Middle Way guidance for Wise Speech defusing suffering.

When my speech is self-directed I get carried away, blurt things out and put myself in compromising situations. My words must be well chosen, and if not I shouldn't speak.

August 29—Wise Speech as Insight*

“Abandoning divisive speech he abstains from divisive speech...Abandoning abusive speech, he abstains from abusive speech...Abandoning idle chatter, he abstains from idle chatter. This is how one is made pure in four ways by verbal action.” AN 10, 176

With the Noble Truths framing vision and insight, penetrated are how intentions direct one’s life and how underlying habits go on to affect speech.

Connected with your intentions, revealed are flashing thoughts and an ongoing mental dialogue. Acknowledge the benefit of honest and courteous speech. An antidote, feel how sincere words are healing and beneficial to you as well as others. The body is at ease and the mind is calm, clear as well as discerning. Through sincere speech, one is trusted and considered a friend.

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One shouldn't be so serious not to have a laugh or share in a light-hearted moment, but when humor goes on to exaggerate or single out someone for foibles that everyone has then speech has taken on a nasty, wounding tone. Even as a gentle chiding, there is always a 'victim.' Words should be measured, fit the situation and be honestly directed to the other person.

Having the patience to listen is an important part of communication. There are times when being an audience and a friend to the other person is the best thing one can do. Reflect on how intention plays a key role in directing life. As a Middle Way guidance, the other person is understood by applying and engaging in Wise Speech. Presently aware, you are responsible for your actions.

Spreading rumors is wounding while gossip is the equivalent of poisoning. Speech and words should be honest, tactful and sincere. Wise Speech promotes trust and goodwill. When honest, friends surround one; when dishonest one is alienated, shunned and has to look over his shoulder.

Settled and focused, acknowledge the emergence of wholesome intentions rather than greed, hatred or harming. The Noble Truths as an intuitive recognition, follow how intention forms into speech. With the subconscious exposed, the Middle Way appreciation directs careless and aggressive thoughts to form as Wise Speech.

Note how the urgency to respond as a self actor drops off. Feel the relief from a prattling mind to the Middle Way conduct-virtue significance for Wise Speech. The Noble Truths non-self insight stands out. The breath relaxing and body calm, the mind clears to a Wise Reflection. Impulsive intentions are stopped from escalating to craving; dormant, active and transgressing habits are controlled.

The self actor waning, the Noble Truth recognition forms as a release from dominating habits. As a penetrating insight for one's intentions through renunciation, goodwill and compassion, self-directed actions aren't promoted.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges the intention to speak forming; Sustained Contact is the intensifying of the speech forming as a motive; Interest as the self actor emerges to respond; 'Joy' turns away the self actor impulse to a Middle Way appreciation to share wholesome speech; and having One-Pointed Clarity is the Noble Truth clarifying insight, having followed the Middle Way guidance for Wise Speech.

With my intentions known, my habits are controlled. My speech has everything to do with being aware and wise. I see how self-directed thoughts form and I'm able to stop my suffering ways.

August 30—Wise Action*

“And how is Wise Understanding the forerunner? One discerns wrong action as wrong action, and Wise action as Wise action. And what is wrong action? Not killing, taking what is not given, irresponsible sex or drug use. This is wrong action...” MN 117

Wise Action builds on the Noble Truths Wise Understanding foundation. The Middle Way Path is followed as a grounded insight experience freeing one from self-attachment. A liberating recognition slowly emerges.

The Middle Way conduct-virtue as a purposeful (ethical) action, Wise Action aligns one with how intentions play out: goodwill for how one lives and relates with others (in contrast to hatred or ill will); generosity (in contrast to stealing or selfishness); sexual responsibility or abstinence, along with compassion (in contrast to lust and carnal indulgences); and having sobriety (in contrast to alcohol and drug use). Wise Action further builds on the Noble Truths foundation. The Middle Way is followed as a grounded insight experience ending self-attachments. A Wisdom-Liberating recognition forms.

This present Sense Realm experience follows the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle. Action begets action without end. A body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification has brought one to this present self-manifestation. A limiting sensory-related self-deception is all that one has known. A subconscious habitual connection is revealed. Karma, the thought before the thought or action, actions are willed. Unfortunately, the self actor is careless, impulsive, and indulgent. The Four Noble Truths are the needed insight and the Middle Way is practically applied and followed.

Feel the urgency and the demands from the many compelling habits. A switch isn't flipped and the stress and problems disappear. Realize how impulsive habits affect and dominate one both physically and mentally. Breathing constricted, face drawn, jaw clenched, throat tight, chest and pelvic pressure, while the mind narrows and is strained. Now settled and focused, the role of conduct-virtue as Wise Action is engaged. Wise Action is about living a sane, responsible and wise life rather than dominated by reckless habits linked with craving to produce suffering episodes.

As a Wise Reflection, question and review your intentions. Whether through thought, speech or deed, do actions lead to your affliction or to that of another? Is

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the intended action unskillful and leads to suffering consequences? But if on reflection one knows the action not to cause harm, to be skillful and have beneficial consequences, then the action is followed through.

Slowly begin to relax the demanding self-intention as physical stress (facial tension, abdominal and pelvic pressures) as well as gently releasing the mental strain. Gradually the habitual buildup disperses. Feel relief as a craving urgency isn't engaged and self-promotion subsides. Acknowledge the shift away from impulsive intentions. Not only are the Monkey Mind distractions quieted and the Three Poisons dormant, but feel the deeper equanimity as relief from craving. Responsible and controlled, one's actions are revealed as supporting a self actor. Not harming one is compassionate, not lying one is honest, not stealing one is generous, sexually responsible one is celibate or monogamous, not taking recreational drugs or consuming alcohol one is sober and responsible.

Through Wise Action the Noble Truth recognition to non-self insight is known, how conditions and actions arise, the ceasing of conditions and actions, and the Middle Way guidance followed releasing self-obsession.

My intentions lead me to action and my actions make up my life. As I think, speak, and act, so am I as a self actor. I follow Wise Action.

August 31—Wise Action as Goodwill*

“In any event, you should train yourselves: ‘Our minds will be unaffected and we will say no evil words. We will remain sympathetic to that person’s welfare, with a mind of good will, and with no inner hate. We will keep pervading him with an awareness imbued with good will and, beginning with him, we will keep pervading the all-encompassing world with an awareness imbued with good will —abundant, expansive, immeasurable, free from hostility, free from ill will.’ That’s how you should train yourselves.” MN 21

Goodwill is a respect for others, offering kindness and concern at every moment, situation and encounter. Separating from a self-association, one isn’t motivated by ill will or to harm; sharing with others as an open communication and mutual respect. There can be disagreements, hostility and war or there can be tolerance, understanding and goodwill; battle lines and a winner-take-all attitude vs. thoughtfulness and being a peace maker. The axiom to treat others as you would want to be treated is followed.

Like a slap across the face, ill will is painful. The consequences are the bad feelings and rancor raging, along with enmity and animosity for others. Acknowledge the warning signs—pressure at the forehead and around the temples, eyes squinting, jaw clenched, mouth dry, neck veins bulging, a tightness at the chest as breathing becomes tense from the hostility while thoughts painfully narrow. Anger suffocates and is stifling. Take some deep breaths. Smile, be comfortable and at ease. Relax the one-sided selfish way of looking at things. Acknowledge the crushing pressure of frustration and hatred to lash out, fight or be on the defensive.

Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation open to goodwill and also to the role of purposeful action. Acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing flow of ill will as self-intention. Note the challenge through an inflexible ‘my way’ attitude. Settling in concentrated awareness, acknowledge the emergence of patience and beneficial options rather than confrontations and unhappy endings. As a Wise Reflection recognize how ill will leads to blind rage. Underlying habitual tendencies exposed, slowly follow the gradual shift to a Middle Way appreciation. As self softens, hostility and anger give way to the Wise Action of goodwill. A personal recognition established, a Middle Way understanding for life without self-intrusion is experienced.

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Realizing the action of goodwill not only turns away from impulsive compromising behavior, but as actions no longer escalating to craving and unsettling consequences. Ill will is self-associated and follows a self-promoted intention. Follow how craving isn't engaged and doesn't lead to suffering. Feel the change in the breath's quality and attention as anger is viewed from a Middle Way appreciation. Reflect on how motives play a crucial role in directing and charging life. Presently aware, one is responsible. The Noble Truth recognition for non-self insight stands out.

Open to the role of purposeful action and how motives affect one's life. Acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing habits pulsing as a self-driven tendency. Note how a one-sided self attitude keeps life at a distance. Settling in concentrated awareness, feel the emergence of patience and beneficial choices. Through Wise Reflection recognize how greed turns to selfish thoughts, speech and actions. With the subconscious exposed, follow the shift to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes. As a self-attitude softens, hatred gives way to the Wise Action of goodwill. The self actor wanes as control is taken for one's actions.

Wisely Reflecting, question and review your intentions. Whether through thought, speech or deed, do actions lead to one's affliction or to that of another? Does the unskillful action lead to suffering consequences? But if on reflection one knows the action to cause no harm, to be skillful and have beneficial consequences, then follow through with the action.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges anger like a sharp pin prick; Sustained Contact recognizes anger intensifying; Interest as the intention for anger begins to dominate; 'Joy' is a recognition of the hostile intention to follow the Middle Way guidance of goodwill; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a Noble Truth clarifying insight defusing suffering, follows the Middle Way guidance for Wise Action.

As the self actor wanes and control is taken for one's actions, a personal recognition arises. Acknowledge as habits disperse. Through the Middle Way guidance, life is experienced without self-intrusion. Goodwill directs one away from painful consequences to a Noble Truth wisdom recognition to craving's cessation and suffering's end.

Wisely Reflecting, I note when ill will affects me. Patient, I pause, catch my breath and offer good will.

September 1—Wise Action as Truthful*

“One should speak only that word by which one would not torment oneself nor harm others. That word is indeed well spoken.

“One should speak only pleasant words, words which are acceptable (to others). What one speaks without bringing evils to others is pleasant.” THAG 21

You can be dominated as a self actor and fall into fabrication, exaggeration and lies or have recognition and apply Wise Speech as truthful.

Settled and focused, connect with the subconscious to acknowledge the intention and how speech first forms. Speech is affected by a self-association. Living a delusion, everything thought, said and done is to uphold a self-deceived notion.

Feel how the mind flits about in rapid fire sequence conjuring up self-justified stories. Note the breath's strain, physical stress, and mental confusion. Even a 'white lie' is misleading as half a lie is nevertheless a lie. Recognize how subconscious approval is given to carry on self-deceit.

Settling through meditation, Wise Reflection discerns the source of fabrication—the self actor. As a Noble Truth recognition one never again falls into self fantasy, corruption and deceit. Lying certainly affects others, but starts first as an upheaval in one's own life.

Words can injure, create misunderstanding, mistrust and escalate to animosity. Criticism is like jabbing the other person with a stick. Expressing an opinion at every moment no matter how honest only leads to stress and one-upmanship, reflects insecurity. Speaking unkindly is a state of aggression. Confused, agitated and worried, lying and straying from the truth, one is out of sync and restless, plagued by doubts to fabricate yet more lies. Even innocent 'white lies' are misleading. Half the truth is nevertheless a lie. Instead of name calling, finger pointing or blaming, Wise Speech emphasizes awareness, responsibility and honesty rather than blurting out opinions.

Lies, gossip, exaggeration and foul language are disturbing. Feel how breathing becomes difficult and the mind spins out-of-control when engaging in wrong speech.

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The body sickens and the mind sours from the negative dialogue. When insincere, exaggerating, gossiping or lying, note how the mind is confused, jumbled and presently disconnected. There is the urge to cover-up, manipulate and self-aggrandize.

Follow the relief from subconscious habits to a Middle Way appreciation. Feel the change in the breath's quality and attention, moving to a centered recognition. Reflect on how motives play a crucial role in directing life. Open to the role of purposeful action and how motives keep life at a distance. Acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing habits pulsing as self consuming. Settling in concentrated awareness, feel the emergence of patience and beneficial choices. Through Wise Reflection recognize how lying plunges one into compromising actions. With the subconscious exposed, follow the shift to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes. As the self-attitude softens, lying gives way to the Wise Action of honesty. The self actor wanes as control is taken for one's life.

Realizing the action of honesty not only turns away from impulsive compromising behavior, but as actions no longer escalating to craving and unsettling consequences. Lying is self-associated and follows a self-promoted intention. Follow how craving isn't engaged and doesn't lead to suffering. Feel the change in the breath's quality and attention as anger is viewed from a Middle Way appreciation. Reflect on how motives play a crucial role in directing and charging life. Presently aware, one is responsible. The Noble Truth recognition for non-self insight stands out.

Wisely Reflecting, question and review your intentions. Whether through thought, speech or deed, do one's actions lead to affliction or to that of another? Does the unskillful action lead to suffering consequences? But if on reflection one knows one's action to cause no harm, to be skillful and have beneficial consequences, then follow through with the action.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges the carelessness and impulsiveness of dishonest speech; Sustained Contact is the intensifying of negative thoughts forming; Interest as the self actor exaggerates to invent and twist things around; 'Joy' is the recognition of the dishonest intention to follow the Middle Way guidance for honesty; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a Noble Truth clarifying insight defusing suffering, follows the Middle Way guidance for Wise Action.

As the self actor wanes and control is taken for one's actions, a personal recognition arises. Acknowledge as habits disperse. Through the Middle Way guidance, life is experienced without self-intrusion. Truthfulness directs one away from painful

consequences to a Noble Truth wisdom recognition to craving's cessation and suffering's end.

Dishonesty is embittering and compels me to further wrong doing. With my words and speech as truthful I have peace of mind.

September 2—Wise Action as Generous*

“And what is the treasure of generosity? There is the case of a disciple of the noble ones, his awareness cleansed of the stain of stinginess, living at home, freely generous, openhanded, delighting in being magnanimous, responsive to requests, delighting in the distribution of alms. This is called the treasure of generosity.” AN 7, 6

To be generous is to be open, accepting and to share without self-judgment or expectations. The self actor hordes, is calculating, attached and greedy. Generosity leads to positive interactions and friendship. It actually feels good to share and care while greed is detrimental and painful.

Settled and focused, acknowledge how greed and selfishness are actually smothering and suffocating. Follow as the mind is preoccupied and unsettled. Sense how selfish stress and pressures corner one into petty reactions. Note the tense in the body and how the mind is locked in by a self-justified possessiveness and greed. Gently allow the body to relax. The self actor takes a painful toll. Note the rough breath and how the mind narrows. Wisely Reflecting, recognize how greed plunges one into further compromised and aggressive acts.

When stealing there is always the worry of getting caught as well as the guilt that drives the cover-up. Pretended is that nothing is wrong or will come from these actions. Taking short cuts is deceitful and has repercussions. Starting as cold and calculating, one continues as an ingenuous person with ulterior motives. The other person is regarded as a threat or as inferior. A taxing burden, greed is repressing.

Realizing the action of generosity not only turns away from impulsive compromising behavior, but as actions no longer escalating to craving and unsettling consequences. Theft is self-associated and follows a self-promoted intention. Follow how craving isn't engaged and doesn't lead to suffering. Feel the change in the breath's quality and attention as anger is viewed from a Middle Way appreciation. Reflect on how motives play a crucial role in directing and charging life. Presently aware, one is responsible. The Noble Truth recognition for non-self insight stands out.

Wisely Reflecting, question and review your intentions. Whether through thought, speech or deed, do actions lead to one's affliction or to that of another? Does the

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unskillful action lead to suffering consequences? But if on reflection one knows one's actions to cause no harm, to be skillful and have beneficial consequences, then follow through with the action.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges how greed is unsettling; Sustained Contact notes greed intensifying; Interest as the intention for greed dominates; 'Joy' is a recognition for selfish intention to follow the Middle Way guidance for generosity; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a Noble Truth clarifying insight defusing suffering, follows the Middle Way guidance for Wise Action.

As the self actor wanes and control is taken for one's actions, a personal recognition arises. Acknowledge as habits disperse. Through the Middle Way guidance, life is experienced without self-intrusion. Generosity directs one away from painful consequences to a Noble Truth wisdom recognition to craving's cessation and suffering's end.

Greedy and selfish, I actually feel pained and ill at ease. To share and be generous is uplifting.

September 3—Wise Action as Compassion*

“It's impossible, there is no way that — when compassion has been developed, pursued, handed the reins and taken as a basis, given a grounding, steadied, consolidated, and well-undertaken as an awareness-release—viciousness would still keep overpowering the mind.” AN 6, 13

Here in the Sense Realm sensuality dominates as desire. Compassion on the other hand is caring, accepting and having a genuine goodwill for others as well as humanity at large. When other people experience kindness, they in turn come forward to share goodwill.

Recognize how sexual desire keeps one off balance, agitated and wanting. Note the strain from sharp intense breaths while the mind narrows to a sexual fantasy (pressure at the forehead and the back of the eyes and the body in a hyper-hormonal state). Honest communication is dropped because of ulterior motives. Be honest at what is prompting the desire. Feel the distraction and arousal from sexual craving. Stoked by an insatiable passion, abuse, loneliness, and misunderstanding coupled with the sex drive compromise, alienates one from others.

Wisely Reflecting, self-directed motives wane. Follow the breath's quality as a personal recognition and how the habitual accumulation disperses. Not a censorship, the Wise Action of compassion directs one to be responsible and see the other person as a friend and not a carnal object. Having awareness and patience, a sincere consideration emerges. Friendship and goodwill are wholesome and a benefit. Caring and compassion are a Wise Action while passion, desire and lust are an unsettling and dissatisfying pursuit. A Middle Way appreciation for life without self-obsession is experienced as carnal fantasies and compromising situations are turned away.

Open to the role of purposeful action and how motives dominate. Acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing habits pulsing as a self-consumed tendency. Note how a one-sided attitude keeps life at a distance. Settling in concentrated awareness, feel the emergence of patience and beneficial choices. Through Wise Reflection recognize how desire turns into compromising actions. With the subconscious exposed, follow the shift to a Middle Way appreciation removed from

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self extremes. As the self-attitude softens, lust gives way to the Wise Action of compassion. The self actor wanes as control is taken for one's life.

Realizing the action of compassion not only turns away from impulsive compromising behavior, but as actions no longer escalating to craving and unsettling consequences. Desire is self-associated and follows a self-promoted intention. Follow how craving isn't engaged and doesn't lead to suffering. Feel the change in the breath's quality and attention as anger is viewed from a Middle Way appreciation. Reflect on how motives play a crucial role in directing and charging life. Presently aware, one is responsible. The Noble Truth recognition for non-self insight stands out.

Wisely Reflecting, question and review your intentions. Whether through thought, speech or deed, do actions lead to one's affliction or to that of another? Is the action unskillful leading to suffering consequences? But if on reflection one knows one's actions to cause no harm, to be skillful and have beneficial consequences, then follow through with the action.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledge lust as unsettling; Sustained Contact follow as lust intensifies; Interest as the intention for lust dominates; 'Joy' is a recognition of the lustful intention and to follow compassion; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a Noble Truth clarifying insight defusing suffering, follows the Middle Way guidance for compassion as a Wise Action.

As the self actor wanes and control is taken for one's actions, a personal recognition arises. Acknowledge as habits disperse. Through the Middle Way guidance, life is experienced without self-intrusion. Compassion directs one away from painful consequences to a Noble Truth wisdom recognition to craving's cessation and suffering's end.

Compassion and caring are nurturing and healing. Self desire limits me to lust and one-sided relationships.

September 4—Wise Action as Sobriety*

***“Avoiding, abstaining from evil;
refraining from intoxicants,
being heedful of the qualities of the mind:
This is the highest protection.” SNP 2, 4***

Drugs and alcohol use make life a disaster. There is no sense of moderation or perspective. The rush of a drug high is never worth the effects of being out-of-control and the sickening time spent hung over and wasted.

Settled and focused, be patient. Meditation is an intuitive experience, reflective and healing. Note how personal doubts and insecurity cloud the mind. There is an inner child in one who needs caring and healing. Acknowledge the insecurities. Be trusting, have sympathy and patience. Know goodwill. Turn away from reckless behavior to sanity and personal insight. Feel how habits are stifling and tormenting. Wisely Reflecting, begin to gradually release the self-domination and painful history. Disturbing habits give way to an intuitive awareness. Note how the self actor is slowly defused. The ‘natural high’ as a present awareness and Middle Way appreciation leads to understanding and Wise Actions. Sobriety is a benefit. Feel how deep seated habits are stifling and suffering. Wisely Reflecting, the Middle Way appreciation is followed as release from self-domination.

Now with meditation’s settling as concentration, disturbing habitual impulses give way to Wise Reflection. A personal appreciation, feel how the self actor is slowly defused. Confidence is gained. Wisdom as a personal insight is experienced. Follow how motives play a crucial role in directing and charging thoughts speech and actions.

Open to the role of purposeful action and how motives dominate. Acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing habits pulsing as a self-consumed tendency. Note how a one-sided attitude keeps life at a distance. Settling in concentrated awareness, feel the emergence of patience and beneficial choices. Through Wise Reflection recognize how insecurity turns into compromising actions. With the subconscious exposed, follow the shift to a Middle Way appreciation removed from self extremes. As the self-attitude softens, lust gives way to the Wise Action of compassion. The self actor wanes as control is taken for one’s life.

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Realizing the action of sobriety not only turns away from impulsive compromising behavior, but as actions no longer escalating to craving and unsettling consequences. Intoxicants are self-pacifying and follow self-promoted intentions. Follow how craving isn't engaged and doesn't lead to suffering. Feel the change in the breath's quality and attention as anger is viewed from a Middle Way appreciation. Reflect on how motives play a crucial role in directing and charging life. Presently aware, one is responsible. The Noble Truth recognition for non-self insight stands out.

Wisely Reflecting, one questions and reviews one's intentions. Whether through thought, speech or deed, do actions lead to one's affliction or to that of another? Is the action unskillful leading to suffering consequences? But if on reflection one knows the action to cause no harm, to be skillful and have beneficial consequences, then follow through with the action.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges doubts and insecurities arising; Sustained Contact follows as doubt and insecurities intensify; Interest as the self-intention for drug use arises; 'Joy' is a recognition for the doubt and insecurity as intention to follow the Middle Way guidance for sobriety; and having One-Pointed Clarity as a Noble Truth clarifying insight defusing suffering, the Middle Way guidance is followed for sobriety as Wise Action.

As the self actor wanes and control is taken for one's actions, a personal recognition arises. Acknowledge as habits disperse. Through the Middle Way guidance, life is experienced without self-intrusion. Sobriety directs one away from painful consequences to a Noble Truth wisdom recognition to craving's cessation and suffering's end.

Life is already difficult enough without being intoxicated or high. Wisely Reflecting I'm better able to deal with life's challenges to positively direct my actions.

September 5—Wise Livelihood*

“And what is right livelihood? There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones, having abandoned dishonest livelihood, keeps his life going with right livelihood: This is called right livelihood.” SN 45, 8

Wise Livelihood builds on the Noble Truths Wise Understanding foundation. The Middle Way Path is followed as a grounded insight experience freeing one from self-attachment. A liberating recognition slowly emerges.

Wise Livelihood is a fulltime wisdom-directed occupation follows the Middle Way Path bringing one to deliverance and suffering’s end. The Middle Way Path livelihood is applied as discipline, meditation, understanding and insight. Livelihood as a strict-no-nonsense renunciation and restraint focus, along with Wise Reflection prevent habits from joining and escalating as craving. One is either engaged in the Four Noble Truths liberation quest or is overtaken by an exhausting self-upheaval. Renunciation and restraint as living humbly though the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter and medicine is required. Concentration then discerns suffering’s end. One is ever vigilant and heedful.

Wall Street greed, insurance scams, corrupt union leaders, self-serving politicians, officials who obstruct, underhanded lobbyist, arms dealers, toxic waste brought on by unscrupulous companies, price gouging firms, liquor and drug sales, high pressure salesmanship, businesses that take advantage of people down on their luck, prostitution rings and drug trafficking, fictitious drug dispensaries and many more examples, all are self-serving and an ignoble livelihood.

School teachers, for example, nurses, doctors, environmentally related occupations, refuse workers and recycling centers, secretaries, volunteers, charitable and non-profit organizations, accountable government officials, pro-bono work and the like are all worthwhile, beneficial occupations and livelihoods.

Directed as a Middle Way appreciation, follow the composure and grounded attention for Wise Livelihood. Through an intuitive Wise Reflection intentions are an honest expression. Follow the Noble Truth wisdom for life as non-self, craving as delight and pleasure leading one to continued suffering, craving brought to cessation, and the Middle Way guidance as proper livelihood—from self-involved to self-controlled, from carelessness to insightful and wise.

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Everyday pursuits centered around self are fool hearty. The Middle Way guidance for Wise Livelihood as a Noble Truth discernment of life and reality is penetrated and experienced. Sense the shift from worldly preoccupations and self-promoted ways. Acknowledge craving's cessation. Wise Livelihood aligns with the Four Noble Truths and Middle Way guidance.

Acknowledge the patience and equanimity to be dedicated and diligent in one's effort. The Noble Truths are a personal recognition ending self-involved antics. Feel the relief as the habits disperse. Self-directed livelihood, distractions, and pretense fall away. Follow the settling both as a responsibility and control for one's behavior to a Noble Truth clarifying insight.

Through Wise Livelihood the Noble Truth recognition to non-self insight is realized, how conditions and actions arise, the ceasing of conditions and actions, and the Middle Way guidance followed as release from self-obsession.

Stronger, focused and wiser, I'm able to live accordingly and stop my suffering ways.

September 6—Wise Action in Practice*

“...Abandoning the taking of life, he abstains from the taking of life. He dwells with his rod laid down, his knife laid down, scrupulous, kind, compassionate for the welfare of all living beings. Abandoning the taking of what is not given, he abstains from taking what is not given. He takes only what is given, accepts only what is given, lives not by stealth but by means of a self that has become pure. Abandoning uncelibacy, he lives a celibate life, aloof, refraining from the sexual act...” AN 10, 99

As a Wise Livelihood goodwill, gracious speech and responsibility are followed. Wise Reflection for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. The Five Wise Actions are applied as patience and good will, generosity and sharing, being truthful, compassionate and sober responsibility.

Unifying intentions, Wise Livelihood is followed from self-compromised situations experiences and conflicts towards ending craving's urgency as a delight and pleasure. This is the practical aspiration and deliverance of the Middle Way guidance—to be wisely engaged and bring suffering to an end. Applying Wise Livelihood, the underlying motives behind one's actions stand out. Trouble sleeping, nervousness, impatience, quick tempered, indecisive and on edge, or confused and frightened, habitual actions weigh heavily. Living in awareness, Wise Livelihood promotes composure, confidence and responsibility as well as insight for one's actions. Curbed is craving's urgency for suffering consequences.

Wise Livelihood is engaged as an active wisdom focus, further penetrating the Noble Truths. Realized is craving's cessation for desire, a self-identity or as an escape. Recognize the domination for a body/mind obsession through the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Emphasize each of the Noble Truth's recognition as a theme to be further penetrated (Signless Deliverance for non-self, Desireless Deliverance for craving, Emptiness Deliverance for craving's cessation, and the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind as liberation). Recognize impermanence, the dissatisfaction and suffering, and the non-self nature that is life. Body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention, are seen as joining to give the illusion of the 'one;' a Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action life and reality are clarified.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact acknowledges the body as well as mental states; Sustained Contact notes the underlying self-charged habitual

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intention; Interest discerns how livelihood is engaged; 'Joy' follows the Middle Way guidance to Right Action's Wise Livelihood; and having One-Pointed Clarity distinguishes the Noble Truths clarifying insight to suffering's end.

The Middle Way Wise Livelihood connects me to appreciate my intentions and conduct to live my life wisely.

September 7—The Middle Way Right Concentration*

“There is the development of concentration that, when developed and pursued, leads to a pleasant abiding in the here and now. There is the development of concentration that...leads to the attainment of knowledge and vision. There is the development of concentration that...leads to mindfulness and alertness. There is the development of concentration that, when developed and pursued, leads to the ending of the effluents [the self misperception of desire, identity and misunderstanding].” AN 4, 41

Right Concentration joins on three fronts as Wise Effort, Wise Awareness and Wise concentration. Right Concentration builds on the Noble Truths Wise Understanding foundation. The Middle Way Path is followed as a grounded insight experience freeing one from self-attachment. A Wisdom-Liberation recognition slowly emerges.

As a pinnacle of understanding and recognition, the Middle Way Right Concentration discerns the threefold misperception keeping one tied as a self actor to suffering—the drive as craving seeking sensual desire, the drive for existence, driven by self-misunderstanding. Strong-willed habits, associations and attachments have made one a prisoner of one’s own deluded and inaccurate views. This isn’t an intellectual exercise but a true recognition on your part ending a self-obsessed focus. With conduct-virtue impeccable and habit impulses settled, a wisdom experience joins as a focused recognition through the Seven Enlightenment Aids (to be detailed next), discerning the Noble Truths liberating wisdom

Wise Effort—A conscientious and sustained application on your part, each person must dedicate and apply the energy necessary to transform, detrimental mental states and promote beneficial mental states. There is the ongoing battle between unwholesome and unskillful habit energies keeping one bound to self-delusion, and there is also wholesome and skillful effort established through the Middle Way Path bringing an end to the self-drama. With the subconscious exposed, one once and for all does away with dormant, active and transgressing habits.

Wise Awareness—Through awareness directed as Wise Reflection the Insight Meditation experience began and it is through Wise Awareness as a Noble Truth penetration that the self-deception handicapping one is released. Presently grounded, one connects with body, feelings, mind and life-actions to realize the true

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nature of life and reality; the Noble Truth recognition to non-self insight and the final release from self-reference and self-promoting actions.

Wise Concentration—As a breakthrough experience, Wise Concentration unifies the whole of the Middle Way experience (Wise Understanding, Wise Intention, Wise Speech, Wise Action, Wise Livelihood, Wise Effort, Wise Awareness as well as Wise Concentration) to a Noble Truth liberating recognition and experience. A chess player, surgeon or mother watching over her children while swimming are all focused and concentrated, but here Wise Concentration brings together the Middle Way experience as a clarifying realization for suffering's end and the Ultimate Reality, Nirvana. By comparison a self-obsessed mind is unsettled, craves and unwittingly engages in suffering actions. Wise Concentration by passes sense-contacted impressions and worldly distractions to see through the many ongoing causes and effects, and penetrates the Unconditioned Realm.

Settled and focused, relaxed in body and mind, follow Wise Reflection. You aren't inclined to indulge in, act on, or narrow one's attention as a self actor. Note how the breath shifts in sensitivity from lower in the abdomen while awareness doesn't revert to self-conspiring intentions. Note how self-inclined motives as thought impressions and mental jabbering stop. Feel the relief and release from self-fabrication. The body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification is dropped. Follow the Middle Way unity of Right Understanding, Right Action and Right Concentration to a Noble Truth liberating recognition.

Understanding and released from my self-absorbed ways, I bring an end to my suffering. I stop craving and all the compromising fall out ends.

September 8—Wise Effort*

“[a person] generates desire for the non-arising of unarisen evil unwholesome states; he makes an effort, arouses energy, applies his mind, and strives. He generates desire for the abandoning of arisen evil; unwholesome states...he generates desire for the arising of unarising wholesome states...He generates desire for the continuation of arisen wholesome states, for their nondecline, increase, expansion, and fulfillment by development; he makes an effort, arouses energy, applies his mind, and strives. This is called right effort.” SN 45, 8

Wise Effort builds on the Noble Truths Wise Understanding foundation. The Middle Way Path is followed as a grounded insight experience freeing one from self-attachment. A liberating recognition slowly emerges.

Wise Intention and Wise Effort are closely related and overlap as experiences. Wise Intention, however, initially directs the mind and attention while Wise Effort applies the necessary energy to transform and release self-obsession. Take, for example, walking. Intention is telling one's self to walk while effort actively engages the energy to walk. Wise Effort is fourfold: the effort to abandon detrimental mental states; the effort to prevent detrimental mental states; the effort to arouse beneficial mental states; and the effort to maintain beneficial mental states. Through Wise Intention you first connect and address the festering self-dilemma while Wise Effort applies the appropriate energy to actually end self-promoted actions. Wise Effort fulfills the intention of renunciation, goodwill and compassion.

Settled and focused, impeccable in conduct-virtue, Wise Effort joins with the present mental state. Either one is confused and dominated by habits or has a recognition and intuition to wisely deal with them (throughout the meditations 'direct' and 'clear' awareness have been highlighted). Applying a Middle Way appreciation, note how self indulgent and aggressive extremes drop away. The focus as Wise Effort transforms dormant detrimental habits. No longer restless or distracted, one is a therapist-like bringing understanding, healing as well as closure to self-conflicted instances. After all, who knows one better?

Note how the breath's quality is settled and attention is able to perceive underlying habitual stress. Relax to follow the Wise Effort as a concentrated recognition. The subconscious flashes and a mental urgency thrives. Note how one is affected by greed, hatred or confusion (greed is dizzying in its effect, hatred painful and

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burdensome, and confusion a perplexing runaround). Without engaging in the habit, Wise Reflection is directed to distinguish and calmly observe mental activity. Here dormant, active and transgressing mental states reside. The self actor seeks an outlet and expression, but the experience is directed first through Wise Intention then to establishing Wise Effort as rehabilitation. As a Middle Way appreciation, follow the shift from impulsive to a Noble Truth recognition. Acknowledge as the craving to act on the habit falls away. The transferring of karmic energy halted, the Noble Truths discernment directs one to non-self insight and the release from self-reference.

As a mature practitioner, renunciation and restraint are followed to control sense-contacted experiences. Concentration is now a steady recognition, dealing with and overcoming dormant habits. Should habit energies win out, return to recognize the breath's quality and ongoing physical stress then to relax and again draw on Wise Effort to deal with the challenging mental state. Wise Effort is an active connection with the Noble Truths liberating vision.

My effort now takes me deeper. I see through my self-ordeal to focus as a Noble Truth recognition.

September 9—Five Techniques in Assisting with Wise Effort*

“Now when a [person]... attending to another theme... scrutinizing the drawbacks of those thoughts... paying no mind and paying no attention to those thoughts... attending to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts... beating down, constraining and crushing his mind with his awareness... steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it: He is then called a [person] with mastery over the ways of thought sequences.” MN 20.

Five helpful techniques are applied to dealing with difficult and nagging habitual issues: identify, replace, turn away from, observe and expel.

Identify: Recognizing the ongoing habit neutralizes the unwholesome thought and returns one to a present-minded Wise Reflection. Realized is the danger and downfall of careless thoughts and behavior which join with craving to have far reaching suffering consequences.

Following the breath’s quality, first touch base with Wise Intention to identify then redirect the habitual energy. Note how the inner monologue urges one on. Greed, hatred and confusion are at the core of self role playing. Emphasizing conduct-virtue as Right Action, slowly turn your awareness to realize Wise Effort. Intention is applied to directly engage and deal with the festering habit. Wisely Reflecting, Wise Effort is applied to sensitively remove the detrimental habitual energy. Go on to disengage from the body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Through a Middle Way appreciation one isn’t caught up by self extreme reactions. Acknowledge the relief and release as a Noble Truth insight for cessation and suffering’s ending.

Replace: Aware that concentration has lapsed, refocus to connect with the breath. Feel how the breath is labored. Note the tension at the forehead, temples pounding, mouth dry, a constricting pressure at the chest, stomach sour, and blood pressure and pulse rate soaring. Anxious and out of control, a self-identification dominates. A body scan reveals the breath as short and sharp while the mind is narrowed and pressured. Take 5-7 deep breaths to ease the tension. Feel where you are resisting. Allow the conflicting energy to disperse and release. As a Middle Way appreciation one doesn’t indulge nor fight with the situation. Gradually the unwholesome habit is defused.

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Sensual desire is met by reflecting on the body as a biological function. The person as the object of lust is taken to be a brother, sister, an own child or as a mother or father. Wisely Reflecting, the charged thought impression is diminished. A calm Middle Way appreciation is experienced.

When affected by anger and ill will, arousing goodwill and loving-kindness dispels the negative thoughts. Feel how the physically and mentally recoil, the moment perceived as a threat. But things are rarely as bad and one-sided as made out to be. Touch base with patience to be open and flexible. Now centered, ease deeper into the meditation to note how the body and mind respond to ill will (body tense and attention narrow and rigid). Wise Effort weakens then replaces the unwholesome thought. Slowly self-obsession is defused.

Depressed and confused, a self-absorbed imagination is deceiving. Acknowledge how uncertainty and nervousness are reflected as a shallow, strained breath. Tension wrinkles the brow and forehead, dry lips are licked, and the stomach is nervous while anxious thoughts flash. Wisely Reflecting, begin to relax the many pressure points. Sense the shift from detrimental mental states to a mindful release. Relaxing the self-hold, accumulated habits disperse. Goodwill and patience go on to pacify insecurity. A recognition as remorse and seeing the drawbacks in allowing detrimental thoughts to persist, stopped is self-harming. Beneficial and wholesome efforts quell the self actor. Through a Middle Way appreciation one isn't caught up in self extreme reactions.

Turning away from: direct the mind from detrimental thoughts to reconnect with the breath's quality and wholesome states. Take 5-7 deep breaths to reestablish a present awareness. Acknowledge the burden and affecting distraction. Slowly allow the unwholesome thoughts to disperse. Follow Wise Reflection to understand how a self-centered focus has you cornered, off balance and unsettled. Specifically craving after as a delight and pleasure is the culprit along with self-associated anger or resentment, leading to varying degrees of sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair.

The Middle Way is all about having the recognition to wisely deal with my self-consuming ways. As a self actor I'm careless. Meditating I'm aware and all the wiser.

September 10—Five Techniques Continued*

“He thinks whatever thought he wants to, and doesn't think whatever thought he doesn't. He has severed craving, thrown off the fetters, and — through the right penetration of conceit — has made an end of suffering and stress.” MN20

Observing: Follow the Conditions Arising cycle to recognize how conditions, pressures, influences and elements contribute to form mental states. Acknowledge the disposition for a body/mind identification to continually justify plans and actions. Following the causes and effects pattern, trace reactions as a personal insight (“This being that exists; through the arising of this that arises. This not being, that does not exist; through the ceasing of this that ceases,” MN 79 and “When this exists, that comes to be; with the arising of this, that arises. When this does not exist, that does not come to be; with the cessation of this, that ceases” SN 12, 62, 2.).

Practical and relevant as an understanding, the Five Remembrances are key observations clarifying life—sickness, aging, death, inevitable change and responsibility for actions.

Noting one's own frailty, move from self-reacting to having Wise Reflection for sickness. As an insight for illness one is better prepared and able to deal with disabling moments. Through a Middle Way appreciation one isn't caught up by the extreme reactions.

Noting one's own physical weakness, move from self-reactions to connect with Wise Reflection for aging. Through a Middle Way appreciation one isn't caught up by the extreme reactions.

Not a morbid or fatalistic view, death is an honest realization of life. One moves from self-reactions to connect with a Wise Reflection for mortality. Follow how life energy arises, plays out and then fades. Through a Middle Way appreciation one isn't caught up in the extreme reactions.

You will be separated from everything you love, hold dear, and possess. Life as action has its passing and seasons—conditions, pressures, influences and elements. One moves from self-reactions to connect with Wise Reflection for loss. Through a Middle Way appreciation one isn't caught up in the extreme reactions.

Feel how compelling habit actions arise to affect one physically and mentally. Noting the actions, one moves from self-reactions to connect as a Wise Reflection with

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responsibility. Through a Middle Way appreciation one isn't caught up in the extreme reactions.

The Five Remembrances honestly reflect life rather than being negative, a despair or denial. Not caught by surprise, but rather Wisely Reflecting and following a Middle Way appreciation, life is discerned as it actually is. With nothing enduring, impermanence is a part of life. Awareness and understanding increase and mature. As a self actor one is at odds with and turns away from life's harsh reality. As a Middle Way appreciation isn't caught up in self extreme reactions and habits. Acknowledge the Noble Truths insight for craving's cessation and suffering's end. Follow the awareness as well as relief and release to actually not struggle and be at odds with life's challenges. The self actor cries and suffers, but following the Middle Way Path the self actor doesn't dominate and is defused.

Expelling: As a last resort the burdensome unwholesome thought is forcefully expelled from mind. By calling strict attention to desire, ill will or harming, identification and detrimental self-impressions are dropped.

Feel as unwholesome thoughts are suffocating. One's own worst enemy, note how a self-ideal is grasped. The Noble Truth insight recognizes self as suffering, the craving attached with self, the cessation from craving as freeing, and the Middle Way Wise Effort stopping suffering. Consider the thought provocation like dropping a red-hot iron bar. Detrimental states are released through Wise Effort. Following a Middle Way appreciation, one isn't caught up in self extremes.

Acknowledge the Noble Truth insight experience as renunciation and restraint from self suffering.

I don't have to be dominated or ruled by self. The Middle Way experience directs me to deal with my tormenting self-delusion.

September 11—The Wise Effort Abandoning Detrimental Mental States*

“He generates desire, endeavors, activates persistence, upholds and exerts his intent for the sake of the abandonment of evil, unskillful qualities that have arisen.” SN 45.8

Self-obsession is like holding on to a red-hot iron bar—a suffering. Stopped and abandon are careless detrimental habits from infiltrating thoughts, speech and actions. Mistaking reality as self is the culprit.

Settled and focused, follow the breath’s quality to connect with the present mental state. Through Wise Intention first recognize subconscious habitual impulses as flashing images and as an inner sounding monologue. Note the urgency of the body/mind identification compelling you to act. Following a Middle Way appreciation, Wise Intention as a recognition naturally gives way to Wise Effort. Concentrate and meditate to actively control the unsettling dormant impulses.

Now applying the Middle Way Wise Effort, literally disconnect with the self-formed habit intention and associations for desire, hatred and harming. Desire is subdued by patience and renunciation and restraint; goodwill is the direct opposite of hatred; while compassion counters harmfulness. Here craving after is prevented from carrying over to future consequences. Note the shift away from the self upheaval as physical relief as well as the mind settling to a concentrated recognition. Wise Effort as an active experience directs the Noble Truths knowing and release. Follow how self-conceit and restlessness go on to be subdued and misunderstanding for self identification clears.

Engaged in Wise Effort, thoughts, speech and actions are monitored. Are you or others adversely affected? If so stop from acting on the detrimental impulse, or if the motive is positive proceed with the responsible action. Note how craving’s urgency is stopped. Should one slip-up, acknowledge the faux pas to rejoin with Wise Effort. Also guard against too strong an effort leading to restlessness or being casual and falling back into laziness.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath’s quality to go on to connect with the mental state, noting the subconscious monologue; Sustained Contact connect with Wise Intention for desire, ill will or harming to apply the Wise Effort of renunciation, goodwill or compassion; Interest follows through with the Wise Effort to expel the detrimental thought; ‘Joy’ feels the relief and release from the

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detrimental manifestation; and having One-Pointed Clarity connects with the Noble Truth for craving (for desire, self-identity, and as an escape) as cessation from escalating to suffering consequences.

Unknowingly, I hurt and brought myself to suffering. But now I have the recognition to deal with detrimental states and turn away from self-obsession.

September 12—The Wise Effort Preventing Detrimental Mental States*

“There is the case where a [person] generates desire, endeavors, activates persistence, upholds and exerts his intent for the sake of the non-arising of evil, unskillful qualities that have not yet arisen.” SN 45.8

While on a basic level you may seem settled, yet the subconscious mind is active and restless as a self-related dialogue sounds. Acknowledge the compelling conditions, pressures, influences and elements for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Note the underlying stress of conceit and restlessness. Feel the pressured expectations involved in fulfilling and furthering a self-ordeal. Actively engaged in preventing unwholesome mental states, exert the Wise Effort to abandon detrimental thoughts, careless speech and harmful actions.

Settled and focused, follow the breath’s quality to connect with the present mental state. Through Wise Effort subconscious impulses are corrected. Note the urgency of the body/mind identification as subtle compelling motives. Concentrate to now control unsettling dormant impulses. Stopped is craving after from being engaged and playing out.

Applying the Middle Way Wise Effort literally disconnects the self-formed habitual intentions for desire, hatred and harming. As the habitual buildup disperses, feel the physical relief as well as the mind clearing. Note how craving is stopped from being engaged and playing out. Acknowledge how the self-turmoil falls away. The Noble Truths clarification is realized. Follow how self-conceit and restlessness go on to be subdued and misunderstanding falls away.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath to go on to connect with mental states, noting the subconscious monologue and dormant potential of detrimental states; Sustained Contact connects with Wise Intention to apply renunciation, goodwill and compassion; Interest follows through with Wise Effort to keep any detrimental thoughts from arising; ‘Joy’ is the relief and release from dormant habits not arising; and having One-Pointed Clarity connects with the Noble Truth as craving (for desire, self-identity, and as an escape) is stopped from escalating to suffering consequences.

The way to stop a fire is to prevent it from happening. The way to stop my suffering is to prevent negative thoughts from forming.

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September 13—The Wise Effort Promoting Beneficial Mental States*

“He generates desire, endeavors, activates persistence, upholds and exerts his intent for the sake of the arising of skillful qualities that have not yet arisen.” SN 45.8

The Middle Way is the final action to end all self related action. Having remorse and now seeing into the drawbacks of detrimental actions, you engage in the Wise Effort to cultivate beneficial mental states. Wise Intention as renunciation and restraint prevents sensual contact and greed; goodwill cuts off hatred; and compassion is a wholesome offering stopping harming. Required from one is the effort to develop beneficial mental states.

Settled and focused, follow the breath’s quality to connect with the present mental state. Through Wise Effort the subconscious is engaged. Here images flash and an inner dialogue sounds. Note the urgency of the body/mind identification as charged motives. Wisely Reflecting, concentrate to now view and control unsettling dormant impulses. Stopped is craving from carrying over to suffering consequences.

The subconscious urgency brought under control, note how self-promoted actions are stopped and craving’s cessation stands out. Beneficial mental states are cultivated through renunciation, goodwill and compassion. Wise Effort is an active insight application.

Awareness Penetrations as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath’s quality to go on to connect with present mental states; Sustained Contact connects with the Wise Intention for renunciation, good will and compassion; Interest follows through with the Wise Effort to engage in beneficial and wholesome thoughts; ‘Joy’ feels the relief and well being to be absorbed in beneficial states; and having One-Pointed Clarity connects with the Noble Truths not to crave (for desire, self-identity or as an escape) and to not suffer.

I make the effort to heal myself and bring suffering to an end. Only I can help myself.

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September 14—The Wise Effort Maintaining Beneficial Mental States*

“He generates desire, endeavors, activates persistence, upholds and exerts his intent for the maintenance, non-confusion, increase, plenitude, development, and culmination of skillful qualities that have arisen: This is called Wise Effort.” SN 45.8.

Joining with Wise Intention to discern the role and affects of subconscious habits, Wise Effort is applied to actively maintain beneficial mental states. In turn wholesome actions along with Wise Reflection direct one as a Middle Way deliverance appreciation. Six qualities stand out forming beneficial effort.

Maintaining: Beneficial mental states are consciously cultivated as both a prevention and continued insightful development, wiping clean all negative and counter productive thoughts and the fickle mind. In turn the Noble Truth Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance and suffering’s end is realized—Nirvana as liberating cessation.

Non-confusion: Understanding and Wise Reflection focus on how craving as delight and pleasure leads to continued suffering, and specifically deals with desire, self-identification and to escape. A clear realization of life and reality as a Noble Truth Proper Wisdom is followed. Nirvana Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

Increase: Responsible actions and maturing discernment for the Noble Truths vision and insight is followed. The self actor follows desire, hatred and ill will. Intention (renunciation, goodwill and compassion) and effort join as a personal Noble Truth clarification. One-sided self-related obstructions are abandoned. Nirvana as suffering’s end is experienced.

Plenitude: The Middle Way factors come together as an intuitive experience for craving’s cessation related to conditioned realms pursuit (Sense, Fine-Material and Immaterial Realm attraction). Realized is the liberation of the Ultimate Reality, Nirvana.

Development: The Middle Way Path Effort is applied and continued as a Noble Truth knowing and release; as insight for non-self and the Conditions Arising causes and effects of purposeful action. Discerned is the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana.

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Culmination: Turning away from self-reference and self-promotion, the Noble Truth Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind and breakthrough to the Unconditioned is experienced. The Supreme Noble Truth, Nirvana is known.

Through Wise Effort and applying wholesome mental states one actively takes part to stop the Conditions Arising causes and effects suffering cycle and, specifically, craving from carrying over. Wise Intention as renunciation, goodwill and compassion helps undo self-identified attachment. Wise Effort is experienced as wholesome, unattached mental states liberating habitual self-involvement. Craving subdued, attachment quelled, and self-generated instances don't arise or play out.

Settled and focused, follow the breath's quality to connect with the present mental state. Through Wise Effort the subconscious is engaged. Here images flash and an inner dialogue sounds. Note the urgency of the body/mind identification as compelling motives arise. Wisely Reflecting, concentrate to now view and control unsettling dormant impulses. Craving is stopped from escalating to suffering consequences.

The subconscious urgency brought under control, note how self-promoted actions stop and craving's cessation stands out. Beneficial mental states are cultivated through renunciation, goodwill and compassion. Wise Effort is an active insight application. Feel the shift in your breath as a relief and unburdening of the self actor. A clarifying awareness and wisdom recognition is realized.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath's quality to go on to connect with the present mental state; Sustained Contact connects with the Wise Intention for renunciation, good will and compassion; Interest actively engages in the Wise Effort to maintain beneficial wholesome thoughts; 'Joy' feels the relief and well being from promoting and continuing beneficial thoughts; and having One-Pointed Clarity connects with the Noble Truths as craving ceases (for desire, self-identity or as an escape) and suffering is eliminated.

Through a dedicated effort I stop my tormenting ways. The Middle Way reveals the way to end my self-obsessed suffering.

September 15—Wise Awareness*

“...remain focused on the body in and of itself, but do not think any thoughts connected with the body. Remain focused on feelings in and of themselves, but do not think any thoughts connected with feelings. Remain focused on the mind in and of itself, but do not think any thoughts connected with mind. Remain focused on mental qualities in and of themselves, but do not think any thoughts connected with mental qualities.’ With the stilling of directed thoughts and evaluations, he enters [Wise Concentration]...” MN 125

Wise Awareness builds on the Noble Truths Wise Understanding foundation. The Middle Way Path is followed as a grounded insight experience freeing you from self-attachment. A liberating recognition slowly emerges.

Wise Awareness is the concentrated observance, recognition and penetration for life and reality without self-reference. The Noble Truths Wise Understanding is applied to the four cornerstone experiences of body, feelings, mind and life-actions which encompass all events and phenomena within this present Sense Realm experience. What had seemed ordinary and even taken for granted, Wise Awareness becomes microscopic-like as all aspects and details of life are seen through the Noble Truth vision and understanding. A personal experience, reflect how purposeful action affects everything (the many actions join to give the illusion of the ‘one’—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature). Turning from a self-engrossed focus, realized is the Ultimate Reality and release from suffering.

Wise Awareness for the Body

Settled and focused, center on the breath’s quality. Awareness as an intensified Wise Reflection cuts through discursive, self-centered thoughts to a Noble Truth recognition. The body and materiality are discerned through its Conditions Arising constituents and purposeful action rather than as individual and self-related. Wise Awareness of the present cuts through the distortion of discursive self-centered views to a Noble Truth wisdom recognition.

Removed from worldly distractions, at the start of meditation breaths are long and heavy then slowly shift to a shorter relaxed respiration. Acknowledge the natural arising and fading of the breath. Note how the body is affected as well as the general passing of pressures. Discern the physical presence (facial muscles, eye

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strain, clenched jaw as well as chest, abdominal and pelvic pressures). A strongly identified body/mind attachment, you have willed yourself to be the person you are. The body goes on to weaken, sicken, age and die. There is no self or individual identity. As a Noble Truth recognition regard the body without reacting or passing judgment—the arising, stretching in transformation, pulling apart, and fading. Acknowledge the insight experience for the body's impermanence.

Whether walking, standing, sitting or lying down (and the many in between positions and activities of bending, stretching, dressing, eating, drinking, urinating, defecating, falling asleep, waking up, etc.), all functions and aspects of the body are duly noted. Acknowledge the burden, conceit, and restlessness affecting the body/mind connection forming as a self-identification. Clearly comprehending, the expectations for the body can never be met or fulfilled and so one suffers.

The Four Dynamic Forces of Extension (solid and material forms); Cohesion (liquid, moisture, gas); Temperature (heat/cold); and Motion (space/air) highlight the body as well as how material actions join and play out. The dominating element makes for solidity (earth, physical body both soft and hard); fluidity (liquid or gas); temperature (heat or cold); or motion (related to space and air). The paradox of impermanence is that for there to be 'one' there must always be two or more conditions, pressures, influences or elements present.

The body isn't supported as personality view, isn't craved after as mine, nor reflects self-conceit. Not to be identified, delighted in or pursued as a past, present or future self-association, one isn't measured or defined by the body. Noting and discerning physical nature both internally as well as externally, a direct wisdom recognition for Conditions Arising, purposeful action runs its course. With the recognition that the body exists to the extent necessary for awareness and knowledge, one is detached and clings to nothing material. Physical identification for self is severed. The body is experienced as a short-lived material flux, supporting a stream of conscious related experiences.

As a refined and deepened concentration, Wise Awareness discerns the Four Noble Truths insight. Beyond self-impressions and feelings, beyond the body/mind association, the First Noble Truth as a Signless Deliverance penetrates the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification as a non-self recognition. The body weakens; feelings are pleasant, painful or neutral; perception identifies and judges; mental reactions reflect a personal history; and conscious attention mistakes life—all arising and fading. Dropping self-obsession, the Noble Truth Signless recognition is realized.

A profound Wise Awareness realization, craving as delight and pleasure for the body brings one to self-suffering. The Second Noble Truth as a Desireless Deliverance is

penetrated as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements forming materially into the body arising.

Craving as desire, for a self-identity or to escape, the Third Noble Truth as an Emptiness Deliverance is experienced. The Conditions Arising cycle is discerned and nullified.

The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to its liberating conclusion (Wise Understanding through to Wise Concentration). Wise Awareness isn't an exercise in logic, but a personally active wisdom as knowing and release from self-domination. The Fourth Noble Truths stand out as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

Lust and greed abandoned, aversion abolished, the underlying tendency for the view and conceit 'I am' is eliminated. Acknowledge as misunderstanding (or ignorance) is clarified by the Four Noble Truths Proper Wisdom. Self-suffering ended, all self-reference and accompanying self-promoted actions are stopped. The present moment opens to the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana is glimpsed.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact as a Wise Awareness for the body; Sustained Contact notes the physical pressures and stress affecting the body; Interest reflects on the body as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature; 'Joy' is without self-identification but concentrating as Wise Awareness; and having One-Pointed Clarity Wise Awareness is experienced as a Noble Truth clarifying insight as release from self-reference and self-promoted suffering.

Over the many months, I've become keenly aware. Now I'm conscious as a breakthrough for my one-sided view on the body.

September 16—Wise Awareness for Feelings*

“Remain focused on feelings in and of themselves, but do not think any thoughts connected with feelings.” MN 125

Feelings takes place at every instance and with every experience. The self actor hones in on pleasant experiences, rejects and flees painful episodes, and turns away all together from boring neutral feelings. A feeling arises when a contacted action strikes a sense organ (eyes/sight, ears/hearing, nose/smell, tongue/taste and skin/tactile). The initial awareness stops discursive habitual impulses but when applied as a Noble Truths Proper Wisdom, Wise Awareness is a recognition ending suffering. Wise Awareness of the present moment cuts through the distorted self-centered view to a Noble Truth wisdom recognition.

Settled and focused, note the pressures, sensations and energies involved. At the start of meditation, strong feelings are distracting. A body scan centering helps settle one down. Recognize how a sensation or a feeling is engaged. Note whether the moment is pleasant, painful or neutral. Follow how you clench and hold on to a pleasant feeling, recoil at pain, and ignore neutral moments. The self actor struggles with the affecting conditions, pressures, influences, and actions. Note the arising as a reaction of emotional feelings. Recognize how one is quick to react and get caught up in wave after wave of sensory stimulation. Acknowledge the interaction and communication between the body and mind.

As a Middle Way appreciation, watch and observe how feelings arise and play out. Without self-judgment, Wise Reflection is a personal awareness. It is the self actor that craves and attaches through greed; avoids, dislikes, and gets angry through hatred; and is worried and doubting when confused. Acknowledge how desire emerges for a pleasant situation. Yearning one becomes attached and seeks to prolong the experience or pursue another. Disliking an encounter makes one frustrated and angry seeking to escape or push the experience away. Neutral moments are shrugged off as a general ambivalence tuning out the experience. Acting out of self interest, a self-ideal is followed. Follow the shift and the release from these habitual reactions.

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As a refined and deepened concentration, Wise Awareness discerns the Four Noble Truths insights. Beyond self-impressions and feelings, beyond the body/mind association, the First Noble Truth as a Signless Deliverance is a non-self recognition.

A profound Wise Awareness, craving after as delight and pleasure leads to suffering. The Second Noble Truth as a Desireless Deliverance is penetrated as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements forming as feelings.

Craving after feelings through desire, as a self-identity or as an escape, the Third Noble Truth as an Emptiness Deliverance is experienced. Self-associated feelings are discerned and nullified.

The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to its liberating conclusion (Wise Understanding through to Wise Concentration). Wise Awareness isn't an exercise in logic, but a personally active wisdom as knowing and release from self-domination. The Fourth Noble Truth stands out as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

Lust and greed abandoned, aversion abolished, the underlying tendency for the view and conceit 'I am' is eliminated. Acknowledge as misunderstanding (or ignorance) is clarified by the Four Noble Truths Proper Wisdom. Self-suffering ended, all self-reference and accompanying self-promoted actions are stopped. The present moment opens to the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana is glimpsed.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath's quality as a Wise Awareness to connect with present feelings; Sustained Contact notes the contact and sensation affecting sense organs of eyes, ears, nose, tongue or skin; Interest reflects on feelings as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature; 'Joy' is without self-identification but concentrating as Wise Awareness; and having One-Pointed Clarity Wise Awareness is experienced as a Noble Truth clarifying insight as release from self-reference and self-promoted suffering.

Wisely Reflecting, feelings aren't self but simply sense contacted experiences. Having renunciation and restraint, I don't let myself get carried away by the sensual and carnal side of this Sense Realm existence.

September 17—Wise Awareness for the Mind*

“Remain focused on the mind in and of itself, but do not think any thoughts connected with mind.” MN 125

Through self-associated reactions and motives, the Three Poisons of greed, hatred and confusion are actively engaged (the subconscious role of dormant, active and transgressing habits). Self-centered thoughts, speech and actions are expressed. Nourished and influenced by many experiences and conditions, mental reactions aren't self but a joining together of personal history, experiences, up bringing, schooling, culture, friendships and associated interactions. Wise Awareness of the present cuts through the distortion of discursive self-centered views to a Noble Truth wisdom recognition.

Note the pressure and burden actively clenching and grasping a familiar and comfortable self-fantasy. Acknowledge how deep seated habits go on to affect as mental reactions. Going deeper below the basic level of breath and body awareness, recognize how generated motives are stirred. Habits churn, flash and echo in the mind. The subconscious exposed, note the pressure and burden as a misplaced self-identity forms around mental experiences. Feel the subtle anxiety driving thoughts, speech and actions. Recognize the habitual compulsion overwhelming one as a self actor.

Established in Wise Awareness, acknowledge the stirred up tension affecting mental states. Feel the stress at the forehead and behind the eyes. What is taken to be a thought is really the mind narrowing to identify and judge an experience. Follow how the mind focuses and mental pressure is felt.

Acknowledge the interaction and communication between the body and mind. A desiring thought has one's attention unsettled and body agitated, stomach jumpy, heart rate up and breath short; a hateful thought and the mind is tight and painful, the body reflecting headaches, a nervous stomach and suffocating-like breath; a confused thought is worrisome with a listless feeling ill at ease or depressed.

Follow the arising of the thought, how the mind narrows and bears down, but also the mindful relaxing to release the thought impression. Wise Awareness defuses the

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self-cacophony bringing ease, relief and control to life. Greed, hatred and confusion are defused.

As a refined and deepened concentration, Wise Awareness discerns the Four Noble Truths insight. Beyond self-impressions and emotions, beyond the body/mind association, the First Noble Truth as a non-self recognition stands out. Discerned is life as conditions rather than self-related. One goes from self-obsessed to a Noble Truth Signless recognition.

A profound Wise Awareness, craving as delight and pleasure for self-identified mental formations leads to suffering. The Second Noble Truth as a Desireless Deliverance is penetrated as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements forming into mental experiences arising.

Craving as desire, for a self-identity or as an escape, the Third Noble Truth as an Emptiness Deliverance is experienced. The Conditions Arising suffering cycle is discerned and nullified.

The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to its liberating conclusion (Wise Understanding through to Wise Concentration). Wise Awareness isn't an exercise in logic, but a personally active wisdom as knowing and release from self-domination. The Fourth Noble Truth stands out as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

Lust and greed abandoned, aversion abolished, the underlying tendency for the view and conceit 'I am' is eliminated. Acknowledge as misunderstanding (or ignorance) is clarified by the Four Noble Truths Proper Wisdom. Suffering ended, all self-reference and accompanying self-promoted actions are stopped. The present moment opens to the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana is glimpsed.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath's quality as a Wise Awareness to connect with the present mental state; Sustained Contact notes the subconscious and active mental monologue; Interest reflects on the mind as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature; 'Joy' is without self-identification but concentrating as Wise Awareness; and having One-Pointed Clarity Wise Awareness is experienced as a Noble Truth clarifying insight as release from self-reference and self-promoted suffering.

I know all too well how self-involved mind games play out. I give excuses, permission or look the other way. Meditating, the subconscious is exposed. I now control all my self-ambitions and fantasies.

September 18—Wise Awareness for Life-Actions*

“Remain focused on [life-actions] in and of themselves, but do not think any thoughts connected with mental qualities.” MN 125

Wise Awareness discerns life-action phenomena through the Four Noble Truths Wise Understanding. Reflecting the many actions in the ‘one,’ the true nature of life is action based and not self-related. The Conditions Arising cycle is underscored by purposeful action, leading to grave or less suffering experiences. Insight into impermanence as an arising and fading as well as non-self is discerned. Wise Awareness of the present moment cuts through the distortion of discursive self-centered views to a Noble Truth wisdom recognition.

Settled and focused, sense the shift away from everyday self-distractions and preoccupations to a Middle Way appreciation. One is aware and observant rather than engaged and reacting. Actions are challenging and disturbing both physically and mentally. Follow how the breath’s energy flows through the body as well as affecting the mind (breath short, body tense and mind stressed, reacting as a self actor). Struggling to keep up with the constant incoming barrage of experiences and changes, disappointment and frustration, anger, depression and confusion creep in as reactions. Through a Middle Way appreciation detach from the extremes for indulgence and aggression. Allow the habit energies to slowly disperse. Acknowledge how the self actor reacts to the moment and how life-actions affect the body and mind. A Wise Awareness recognition, one detaches from self-exhausting greed, hatred and confusion.

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As a refined and deepened concentration, Wise Awareness discerns the Four Noble Truths insight. Beyond self-impressions and feelings, beyond the body/mind association, the First Noble Truth as a Signless Deliverance for life-actions as a non-self recognition stands out. One goes from self-obsessed to a Noble Truth Signless recognition.

A profound Wise Awareness, craving as delight and pleasure for life-actions leads to suffering. The Second Noble Truth as a Desireless Deliverance is penetrated as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements forming into life experiences.

Craving as desire, for a self-identity, or as an escape, the Third Noble Truth as an Emptiness Deliverance is experienced. The Conditions Arising suffering cycle is discerned and nullified.

The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to its liberating conclusion (Wise Understanding through to Wise Concentration). Wise Awareness isn't an exercise in logic, but a personally active wisdom as knowing and release from self-domination. The Fourth Noble Truth stands out as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

Lust and greed abandoned, aversion abolished, the underlying tendency for the view and conceit 'I am' is eliminated. Acknowledge as misunderstanding (or ignorance) is clarified by the Four Noble Truths Proper Wisdom. Suffering ended, all self-reference and accompanying self-promoted actions are stopped. The present moment opens to the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana is glimpsed.

Awareness Penetration as insight: Initial Contact follows the breath's quality as a Wise Awareness for present life-actions; Sustained Contact notes the life-action or phenomena; Interest reflects on the life-action as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature; 'Joy' is without self-identification but concentrating as Wise Awareness; and having One-Pointed Clarity Wise Awareness is experienced as a Noble Truth clarifying insight as release from self-reference and self-promoted suffering.

I've lived life through self-fulfilling actions only to be dissatisfied and suffer. I crave after but always come up short. This was a careless and unwise action. Penetrating the causes and effects purposeful action, I follow the Middle Way ending suffering.

September 19—Wise Concentration*

“But one with both jhana [concentration] and discernment: he’s on the verge of Unbinding.” DH 372

Wise Concentration builds on the Noble Truths Wise Understanding foundation. The Middle Way Path is followed as a grounded insight experience freeing one from self-attachment. A liberating recognition slowly emerges.

Following a strict and disciplined ethics, subconscious impulses and the accompanying self-monologue settle down and give way to a refined and unaffected insight for life and reality. Wise Effort and Wise Awareness merge together as Wise Concentration. Unifying all the eight factors of the Middle Way Path, Wise Concentration focuses as a Noble Truth realization to penetrate the Ultimate Reality, Nirvana. The end of self-suffering is known.

Though not necessary but never the less helpful, emphasized as a concentration tool and directing one towards wisdom is the Fine-Material Absorption or jhanas (Seclusion, Concentration, Equanimity and Detachment). Removed from the Sense Realm obsession for a body/mind identification to a more refined meditative recognition, yet even here a low-level degree self-association exists which must be eradicated.

The concentrated experience assists to subdue, strip away and reveal the subtle conceit and restlessness that overbearing self-identification has. The underlying aspects of self-delusion are revealed.

The Seclusion Absorption

“Whatever qualities there are in the [Seclusion Absorption]—applied thought, evaluation, rapture, pleasure, singleness of mind, contact, feeling, perception, intention, consciousness, desire, decision, persistence, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention—he ferreted them out one by one. Known to him they arose, known to him they remained, known to him they subsided. He discerned, ‘So this is how these qualities, not having been, come into play. Having been, they vanish.’ He remained unattracted and unrepelled with regard to those qualities—independent, detached, released, dissociated, with an awareness rid of barriers.” MN 111

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Meditation is a 'seclusion' from sensory distractions and disturbances related to Sense Realm activities. Acknowledge the separation and detachment from over the top self-indulging ways. Wisely Reflecting, recognize a tranquility without sensory input. Feel as one slowly separates from the coarser Sense Realm body/mind obsession.

Without the contributing factors, dormant, active and transgressing habits aren't engaged. Experience the Seclusion Absorption directed towards a non-self recognition and the cessation from self-reference. Meditation as both instructing and revealing, there is joy as fondness for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification is dropped. Discerned through Wise Reflection is the Conditions Arising causes and effects involved within the Fine-Material Realm and associated concentration. Feel the shift away from a body/mind identification to a Middle Way appreciation detached from self extremes. Recognized is how the Seclusion Absorption is brought about, the purposeful action involved, and how one is instrumental in directing awareness. As a refined concentration connected to the subtler Fine-Material Realm, experience insight for how the mind and consciousness arise and work as well as the non-self recognition. You open to the Seclusion Absorption.

The Fine-Material Awareness serves as an example for something other than sense-related contacted and indulged experiences. All that had been known was a body/mind self-identification. Turned away from is the hardcore deception not as an escape but as a discernment into the true nature of life and reality. The Fine-Material concentration is nevertheless impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action.

Settle to detach from the sensory burden of eyes/sight, ears/hearing, nose/scent, tongue/taste and skin/sensations. Compelling one to act and react, sense stimulation is exhausting and is attached to a body/mind self-deception. With the Sense Realm sensual charge reduced, recognize how self-directed habits and subconscious function and form. The Fine-Material Awareness deepens.

Recognizing how the Seclusion Absorption is brought about, realize the purposeful action involved and how one is instrumental in directing perception. While less dramatic and obvious, there persists a low-level self-attachment. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent.

A wisdom appreciation and recognition is known and penetrated as non-self insight. One is directed to the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm; Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

With my sense contacts undisturbed, I'm able to experience what it is to be without a self-reference.

September 20—The Concentration Absorption*

“Whatever qualities there are in the [Concentration Absorption]—applied thought, evaluation, rapture, pleasure, singleness of mind, contact, feeling, perception, intention, consciousness, desire, decision, persistence, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention—he ferreted them out one by one. Known to him they arose, known to him they remained, known to him they subsided. He discerned, ‘So this is how these qualities, not having been, come into play. Having been, they vanish.’ He remained unattracted and unrepelled with regard to those qualities—independent, detached, released, dissociated, with an awareness rid of barriers.” MN 111

As an absorption removed from sensory engagement, the Fine-Material Concentration Absorption is entered. Note as the discursive monologue, persisting habitual energies and compelling intentions decline. Craving’s urgency for desire, self-identity or as an escape is less demanding.

Settled and focused, the impulse to act out settles. Experience the present connection as a composed, refined attention. Recognize how the Concentration Absorption is brought about through renunciation and sensual restraint. Without sense contacts subdued, feelings aren’t obvious and the Fine-Material Concentration absorption is settled into. Realize the purposeful action involved and how one is instrumental in directing awareness.

The Concentration Absorption continues as a natural extension of Insight Meditation experience and Middle Way appreciation. Through the quieting and releasing of habits to a clarified awareness, joy is experienced. A non-self insight and release from self-involvement stands out.

The self actor urgency settling, allow the Fine-Material Awareness to come naturally. Note the freeing from, separation and detachment from self-absorbed impulses to a concentrated meditation. Wisely Reflecting, an undisturbed tranquility and separation from the coarser Sense Realm preoccupation is experienced.

Acknowledge the open-flowing awareness as the mind settles and mental prattle stops. A Noble Silence is known. Below the level of everyday self-related stress, a concentrated absorbed seclusion emerges. Acknowledge the separation from the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Follow an intuitive recognition. Feel the

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shift away and relief from self-absorbed greed, hatred and confusion. The Middle Way appreciation joins as an intensified Wise Reflection removed from indulgence and hostility. One opens to the Seclusion Absorption as a Fine-Material Awareness.

Self-identification fades into the background. Note the settled and refined attention. The Fine-Material Awareness deepens. Without the contributing sense-related factors, dormant, active and transgressing habits are temporarily defused. Experience the Concentration Absorption as a non-self insight and release from self-reference.

Recognizing how the Concentration Absorption is brought about, realize the purposeful action involved and how one is instrumental in directing perception. While less dramatic and obvious, there persists a low-level self-attachment. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent.

A wisdom appreciation and recognition is known as a penetrating non-self insight. One is being directed to the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm; Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

Not focusing as self, I don't follow or seek out a self-identity.

September 21—The Equanimity Absorption*

“Whatever qualities there are in the [Equanimity Absorption]—applied thought, evaluation, rapture, pleasure, singleness of mind, contact, feeling, perception, intention, consciousness, desire, decision, persistence, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention—he ferreted them out one by one. Known to him they arose, known to him they remained, known to him they subsided. He discerned, ‘So this is how these qualities, not having been, come into play. Having been, they vanish.’ He remained unattracted and unrepelled with regard to those qualities—independent, detached, released, dissociated, with an awareness rid of barriers.” MN 111

Equanimity is more than a lack of disturbance and calm, but an ease, confidence, fulfillment, and release that comes about from having renunciation and restraint for sensory involvement and stepping away from self reactions. Not actively engaged or promoting self, the Equanimity Absorption stands out. Follow the moment as centered, quiet and composed. Separated from Sense Realm interaction, the Equanimity Absorption is experienced as a tranquil awareness. Relief from sensory involvement, equanimity stands out. Subconscious persisting chatter is dormant. The self actor is subdued.

Removed from overt sensory disturbances, impulsive reactions drop away and settle into a tranquility without self-involvement. Follow as the Equanimity Absorption is experienced. The Fine-Material Realm Awareness is a joyful experience, relaxed and having One-Pointed Clarity.

Not compelled to indulge and pursue sensual gratification. Feel the settling, well being and fulfillment. Craving’s urgency for desire, a self-identity or to escape is dropped. Recognized are the conditions as causes and effects generated upholding a self-delusion. You have made yourself the person you are. Experience the unburdening from a self-identification.

As self-identification fades into the background, note how the mind settles to a refined attention. The Fine-Material Awareness deepens. Without the contributing sense-related factors, dormant, active and transgressing habits are temporarily defused. Experience the Equanimity Absorption directed as non-self insight and release from self-reference.

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Recognizing how the Equanimity Absorption is brought about, realize the purposeful action involved and how one is instrumental in directing perception. While less dramatic and obvious, there persists a low-level self-attachment. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent.

A wisdom appreciation and recognition is known as a penetrating non-self insight. One is directed to the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm; Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion suffering ends.

The relief is great. Equanimity expanding, I discern freedom.

September 22—The Detachment Absorption*

“Whatever qualities there are in the [Detachment Absorption]—applied thought, evaluation, rapture, pleasure, singleness of mind, contact, feeling, perception, intention, consciousness, desire, decision, persistence, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention—he ferreted them out one by one. Known to him they arose, known to him they remained, known to him they subsided. He discerned, ‘So this is how these qualities, not having been, come into play. Having been, they vanish.’ He remained unattracted and unrepelled with regard to those qualities—independent, detached, released, dissociated, with an awareness rid of barriers.” MN 111

Equanimity gives way to the Detachment Absorption as a neither-pain-nor pleasure experience disassociated from sensory onslaught and crude self-reference. Absent is all the drama and hyperactivity connected with the Sense Realm. Allow one’s self to know the depths of this settled capacity and recognition. Unrestricted and not bound by sensory indulgence or an overt self-reference, tranquility is experienced as a penetrating recognition removed from self-involvement. Recognized are the conditions as causes and effects generating and upholding a self-delusion.

As a Fine-Material Detachment Absorption, absent is all the drama and hyperactivity connected with the Sense Realm. Acknowledge the clear-minded intuition into self as cessation of the self actor. Recognized is how the Detachment Absorption is brought about. Realize the purposeful action involved and how one is instrumental in directing awareness.

Know the depths of this detached experience and recognition not bound by sensory identification or overt self-reference. A neither-pain-nor pleasure experience removed from sensory onslaught and overt self-reference, note how awareness is marked by relief from exaggerated role playing and craved pursuit. A detached, refined and settled recognition stands out.

Without self-indulgence and reacting to pain or pleasure extremes, a self image doesn’t form. Feel the absence and relief as a weightless unburdening. One-Pointed Clarity as a Detached Absorption emerges as equanimity. Tranquility is experienced as a penetrating mindfulness, undisturbed and not complicated by overt self-involvement.

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Self-identification fades into the background. Note the settled and refined attention. The Fine-Material Awareness deepens. Without the contributing sense-related factors, dormant, active and transgressing habits are temporarily defused.

Recognizing how the Detachment Absorption is brought about, realize the purposeful action involved and how one is instrumental in directing perception. While less dramatic and obvious, there persists a low-level self-attachment. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent. Wisely Reflecting, a Noble Truth non-self insight turns one away from self-reference.

A wisdom appreciation and recognition is known and penetrated as non-self insight. One is directed to the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm; Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

Separating from self I realize the relieved from the sense world onslaught. There can be actual peace from the endless go around.

September 23—The Seven Enlightenment Aids*

“What are the qualities that, when developed and pursued, lead to the culmination of clear knowing and release...The seven factors for Awakening.” SN 46, 6

The Seven Enlightenment Aids are the concentrated realization of the Four Noble Truths as Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. Turned away from once and for all is the body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Penetrated is the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana. Known and experienced is suffering's end. All self-directed habits are stopped and eradicated along with craving as delight and pleasure brought to cessation. The threefold misunderstanding that is ignorance is lifted—the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self. Not to be taken as an intellectual endeavor but rather a firsthand penetrated freedom from habitual self-reference and self-promoted actions. The Awareness, Investigation, Energy, Rapture, Tranquility, Concentration and Equanimity Enlightenment Aids crystallize as a personal realization leading to the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

The Enlightenment Aids have a dual function of ‘actively’ directing as well as ‘settling’ the mind to a focused wisdom discernment. With the Awareness Aid as foundation, Investigation, Energy and Rapture help keep one focused while Tranquility, Concentration and Equanimity help settle to a Noble Truth refined-recognition. With Sense Realm contacts and associated impressions no longer dominating, a deepening regard for seclusion, dispassion and release as cessation is followed and liberation experienced.

Awareness Enlightenment Aid

“...Develops Awareness as a factor for Awakening accompanied by mindfulness of in-and-out breathing—dependent on seclusion...dispassion...cessation, resulting in letting go.” SN 54, 2

From the outset Insight Meditation's experience has been one of engaged, conscious and realized insight for life and reality. Grounded as an actively directed awareness for body, feelings, mind and life-action, Wise Reflection intensifies and matures. As an Awareness Aid wisdom recognition, connects with the Middle Way Wise Understanding for the Four Noble Truths non-self vision and Conditions Arising as purposeful action.

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Realizing the drawbacks as well as having remorse for detrimental, unwholesome actions, follow as craving's urgency as delight and pleasure is stopped from joining with underlying habits. A deepening of the Noble Truths insight, the Awareness Enlightenment Aid focuses keenly on the present without self-perception, judgment or bias. Settled in thoughts, speech and actions through a Middle Way guidance, one's virtue is blameless and beyond reproach. Acknowledge the calm presence and intuition.

Following the 'noble' and discerning realization, one abides in seclusion from worldly affairs and common distractions, while knowing dispassion for sensory experiences and over the top emotional states. Experienced is the release and cessation for the remaining subtle self-attachments of conceit and restless. Acknowledge the settling as a discerning focused wisdom recognition.

Settled and focused, follow the arising and falling of the breath's quality. Note the breath at the start as long and heavy then the shift away from sense-contacted impressions and a self-association as an Awareness Aid recognition.

Previously one's attention flitted about as a Monkey Mind distraction (desire, hatred, dullness and fatigue, restlessness and worry, and doubt and confusion) while the Three Poisons (greed, hatred and confusion) gave way to compromising habits. Unaware, careless intentions undermined thoughts, speech and actions. Through the Awareness Aid distinguished is what is detrimental ('dark' qualities) and what is beneficial ('bright' qualities) of mind. Wisely Reflecting, dormant self-associated states are realized before becoming active and leading to transgressing actions.

Through the Awareness Enlightenment Aid the body/mind connection that is the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention) isn't engaged. Follow as flashing thought impressions quickly disperse and fade before escalating to craving. Note the Noble Truth realization of cessation freed from self-procuring demands and a compelling driven habitual agenda. Below the level of subconscious dormant, active and transgressing habit intentions, awareness is clear, perceptive and discerning.

Not clinging to a self-identity nor provoked or seeking after as craving, follow how the Awareness Enlightenment Aid reveals life as non-self. The Noble Truths clarify misunderstanding, intentions, craving and attachment as self-associated causes and effects no longer thrives. Watch as the self actor so long upheld recedes as cessation. Self-urgency drops and the Conditions Arising purposeful action cycle is defunct. As a Noble Truth direct knowing, release from self-identification follows.

Through the Awareness Enlightenment Aid realize the First Noble Truth Signless Deliverance: the distinguishing recognition for the Five Groupings of Self-Attached Identification as non-self and without a unique self-character. Reality is seen as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and as a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action.

The Second Noble Truth Desireless Deliverance: craving after as delight and pleasure torments life, joining with habitual intentions as suffering.

The Third Noble Truth Emptiness Deliverance: the cessation of all self-generated craved for actions is stopped and suffering's end is known.

The Fourth Noble Truth as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind: The threefold misperception clarified (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self), the Ultimate Reality is known, Nirvana. The Middle Way Path is fulfilled and suffering ends.

Acknowledge the relief as a spaciousness and unburdening from self-domination. Misunderstanding (or ignorance) is lifted. Climaxing as seclusion, dispassion, release and cessation, the Enlightenment Aids are a Noble Truth realization for liberation. A fire gone out, a thirst quenched, a cooling down, the Awareness Aid recognition established, self-reference and self-promotion cease. An active and personal realization, the Middle Way Path follows Stream Entry passage final liberation. The Noble Truth experience opens to the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana.

Connecting with my breath as awareness, calm and grounded, I realize the profound Noble Truth recognition—self is a fraud I've unwittingly followed. Through the Awareness Aid I see the conditions consuming me as a self actor. My self-obsession falls away.

September 24—The Investigation Enlightenment Aid*

“He develops Investigation of qualities as a factor for Awakening...—dependent on seclusion...dispassion...cessation, resulting in letting go.” SN 54, 2

Through the Investigation Aid mental states are not only examined and reflected on, but all self-reference and self-directed actions are turned away from. The body, feelings, mind and life-actions are impermanent, arising and fading (as well as dissatisfying and subject to suffering). Together as an Enlightenment Aid discernment focused and experienced through seclusion, dispassion, release and cessation, the Investigation Aid penetrates the Four Noble Truths deliverance insight.

Settled and focused, as a Wise Reflection the Investigation Aid reflection recognizes the ebb and flow for how actions arise, peak, and go on to fade as well as their non-self nature (multiple actions joining to give the illusion of the ‘one’). Distinguished are the Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action (“This being that exists; through the arising of this that arises. This not being, that does not exist; through the ceasing of this that ceases,” MN 79 and “When this exists, that comes to be; with the arising of this, that arises. When this does not exist, that does not come to be; with the cessation of this, that ceases” SN 12, 62, 2). Discerned are the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification as the manifestation and by product of hampering habits, desires and craving after. The Five Remembrances stand out—aging, sickness, death, loss as well as responsibility for actions directing life.

Body—the body is regarded for its external and internal sources and interactions. A strongly identified body/mind attachment, you have willed yourself to be the person you are. The body goes on to weaken, sicken, age and die. There is no self or individual identity. As a Noble Truth recognition the body is regarded without reacting or passing judgment. Acknowledge the insight experience for the body’s composition and impermanence. Noting and discerning physical nature, there is a direct wisdom recognition for Conditions Arising as well as how purposeful action runs its course.

With the recognition that the body exists to the extent necessary for awareness and knowledge, one is detached and clings to nothing material. Physical identification for

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self is broken. Experience the body as a short-lived material flux, supporting a stream of conscious related experiences.

Feelings—feelings are regarded for their external and internal sources and interactions. Follow how one clenches and holds on to pleasant feelings, recoils at pain episodes, and ignores neutral moments. The self-actor struggles with the conditions, pressures, influences, and actions. Noted are how sense contacts generate sense impressions and feelings are experienced (eyes/sight, nose/smell, tongue/taste, ears/sound, skin/touch and mind/thoughts). Recognize the reactions as wave after wave of sensory stimulation. Acknowledge the interaction and communication between the body and mind. Noting and discerning feelings, there is direct wisdom recognition for Conditions Arising as well as how purposeful action runs its course.

Mind—the mind is regarded for its external and internal sources and interactions. Habits churn, flash and echo in the mind. The subconscious exposed, note the pressure and burden as a misplaced self-identified fiction forms around mental experiences. Feel the subtle anxiety driving one. Recognize the habitual compulsion compelling the self actor.

Self-centered thoughts, speech and actions are engaged. Nourished and influenced by many external experiences and conditions, mental reactions aren't self but a joining together of personal history, experiences, upbringing, schooling, culture, friendships and associated interactions. Noting and discerning the mind, there is a direct wisdom recognition for Conditions Arising as well as how purposeful action runs its course.

Life-Actions—live-Actions are regarded for their external and internal sources and interactions. Reflecting the many actions in the 'one,' the true nature of life is action based and not self-related. A threefold-misperception blurs reality (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self). As an Investigation Aid personal intuition, follow and recognize how associated conditions play out. Noting and discerning life actions, there is a direct wisdom recognition for Conditions Arising as well as how purposeful action runs its course.

Through the Investigation Enlightenment Aid the First Noble Truth Signless Deliverance is realized: discern compelling factors to penetrate the self-identified illusion.

The Second Noble Truth Desireless Deliverance: provoked through sense-contacted impressions and generated feelings, craving conditions and follows to suffering consequences.

The Third Noble Truth Emptiness Deliverance: from an off base self-viewed misunderstanding, the Conditions Arising cycle plays out. Realized is craving's release as cessation.

The Fourth Noble Truth as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind: with the Conditions Arising cycle penetrated, conditioned states as well as a self-fabrication is released to know suffering's end as liberation.

Acknowledge the relief as spaciousness and unburdening from self-domination. Misunderstanding (or ignorance) is lifted. Climaxing as seclusion, dispassion, release and cessation, the Enlightenment Aids are a Noble Truth realization for liberation. A fire gone out, a thirst quenched, a cooling down, the Investigation Aid recognition established, self-reference and self-promotion cease. An active and personal realization, the Middle Way Path follows Stream Entry passage to final liberation. The Noble Truth experience opens to the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana.

The Investigation Aid reveals how actions as causes and effects affects life. I've carelessly contributed to my suffering by my self-motivated ways. But now I have wisdom and understand life to stop my self-antics.

September 25—The Energy Enlightenment Aid*

“He develops Energy as a factor for Awakening...—dependent on seclusion...dispassion...cessation, resulting in letting go.” SN 54, 2

Centered by the Awareness Aid, applied is the appropriate energy for wisdom-liberation. The Investigation Aid joins with and builds on the focus and application of the Energy Enlightenment Aid. Together as an Enlightenment Aid discernment focused and experienced through seclusion, dispassion, release and cessation, the Energy Aid penetrates the Four Noble Truths deliverance insight.

Similar to and overlapping with the Middle Way Wise Effort, the Energy Aid differs slightly here as directing energy to the final liberation as the cessation of suffering. Whatever remains to be attained, is attained. Whatever remains to be achieved, is achieved. Whatever remains to be realized, is realized. One can never again turn back to a careless and confused self-deception, but is headed towards liberation. As Energy increases you are able to sustain and follow through as a Noble Truth clarified realization.

From the beginning Insight Meditation required dedication as energy. Now effort brings one to final deliverance and the move to finish with self-limiting motives and impulsive behavior. Directing the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path as conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, each person is obliged to make the effort, have the patience, and apply themselves in order to bring an end to self-suffering.

Just as an athlete spends years in training for a moment of excellence, the Middle Way Path requires a strong, determined and dedicated commitment. The Energy Aid then is a strict, no nonsense, no excuses exertion. Wise Intention (renunciation for desire, goodwill for hatred, and compassion for harming), is cultivated and applied. The Energy Aid not only stops compromising habits and connects you with beneficial actions, but directs as focus and concentration to experience the Noble Truths deliverance.

Settled and focused, follow the arising and falling of the breath. Note the breath's quality at the start as long and heavy then the shift away from sense-contacted impressions and self-identification. Distinguished are how subconscious intentions join with craving then carry over to suffering. The applied Energy Aid joins with Wise

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Effort (the effort to stop detrimental mental states; the effort to prevent any future manifestation of detrimental mental states; the effort to develop beneficial mental states; the effort to continue beneficial mental states). Experiencing cessation as a relief and release, self-absorbed habits aren't replenished and craving's compelling urgency falls away.

Through the Energy Enlightenment Aid realize the First Noble Truth Signless Deliverance: self follows desired energy. Cut off are all passion and attachments. realizing the non-self insight.

The Second Noble Truth Desireless Deliverance: craving as delight and pleasure keeps self-associated actions going. Renunciation and restraint for sense-contacted experiences is applied.

The Third Noble Truth Emptiness Deliverance: craving's compulsion brought to cessation, the conditions of contact and feelings don't escalate to craving. Suffering's end is known.

The Fourth Noble Truth as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind: The Middle Way Path as directed energy is followed and applied as the final action to end all self-related actions and suffering.

Acknowledge the relief as a spaciousness and unburdening from self-domination. Misunderstanding (or ignorance) is lifted. Climaxing as seclusion, dispassion, release and cessation, the Enlightenment Aids are a Noble Truth realization for liberation. A fire gone out, a thirst quenched, a cooling down, the Energy Aid recognition established, self-reference and self-promotion cease. An active and personal realization, the Middle Way Path follows Stream Entry passage to final liberation. The Noble Truth experience opens to the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana.

Following the Middle Way guidance ending suffering, I realize the Four Noble Truths significance.

September 26—The Rapture Enlightenment Aid*

“He develops Rapture as a factor for Awakening—dependent on seclusion...dispassion...cessation, resulting in letting go.” SN 54, 2

A part of wisdom insight, the Rapture Enlightenment Aid reflects how joy and happiness are connected with the Middle Way experience as suffering subsides. There is relief and joy from understanding life, going from carelessness and craving after to a mature and joyfully released insight. Acknowledge the happiness as release from craving’s compelling urgency and suffering’s end near at hand. Together as an Enlightenment Aid discernment focused and experienced through seclusion, dispassion, release and cessation, the Rapture Aid penetrates the Four Noble Truths deliverance insight.

On the surface, sensual indulgence and worldly involvements seem to be the answer, but desire is an exhausting and dissatisfying pursuit (craving for desire, self-identity or as an escape), and is actually a high-pressured driven self-suffering. Sensual gratification is dizzying and tormenting. Until one is truly settled and steadfast in conduct and virtue, you won’t be able to proceed along the Middle Way Path to realize the end of self-associated craving. The humbling fulfillment of food, clothing, shelter and medicine, less is best. The Four Noble Truths deliverance is a joyful release from self-promoted actions. Rapture emerges as doing away with careless habits to realize craving’s end. Be careful not to be overwhelmed, disturbed or led astray as an attachment to this pleasure. Rather, note how the mind is at ease, peaceful and relieved. Cessation as relief and release is a joyful experience.

Feel the shift as the Middle Way guidance directs one to the unconditional fulfillment from self-centered expectations, fabrications and pursuit. Not fueled (or fooled!) by sense-contacted impressions or a self-deceived imagination, self-obsession winds down. Realize the joy and rapture that comes from actually stopping and not giving in to self-related intentions. Following the Rapture Aid, acknowledge the fulfillment and release from craving’s domination as the impulsive actions falls away (renunciation and restraint stop sensory contact and feelings along with responsible conduct). Habits transformed, craving doesn’t arise.

Settled and focused, the Rapture Aid reveals the Noble Truth recognition inherent with craving’s cessation; having renunciation for sensual experiences, along with

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goodwill and compassion, the Conditions Arising long suffering history is stopped. Motives recognized and detrimental habits stopped, craving doesn't flourish. The Rapture Aid experience aligns with the Noble Truth recognition for cessation as a relief and joy. For example, pulling your hand away from a fire one would feel immediate relief and the same is true with craving's cessation. The Middle Way threefold guidance (conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, insight-wisdom) is followed. As the Rapture Aid concentrated awareness is established, fulfillment isn't found in sense-contacted impressions to uphold a self-identity. Known is cessation as relief from suffering actions. Wisely Reflecting, craving is found unattractive and one doesn't give in to desire, a self-identity, or to escape.

Through the Rapture Enlightenment Aid realize the First Noble Truth Signless Deliverance: it is a joy to know the reason for suffering—a body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification.

The Second Noble Truth Desireless Deliverance: craving mistaken as beneficial, control for desires and over the top reactions, is a released fulfillment.

The Third Noble Truth Emptiness Deliverance: with craving stopped, suffering stops and happiness is experienced (self is suffering and cut off is desire, hatred and harming associated with self-fabricated intentions).

The Fourth Noble Truth as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind: misunderstanding relating to a self-illusion ending, one turns to the fulfillment of the Ultimate Reality, Nirvana.

Acknowledge the relief as spaciousness and unburdening from self-domination. Misunderstanding (or ignorance) is lifted. Climaxing as seclusion, dispassion, release and cessation, the Enlightenment Aids are a Noble Truth realization for liberation. A fire gone out, a thirst quenched, a cooling down, the Rapture Aid recognition established, self-reference and self-promotion cease. An active and personal realization, the Middle Way Path follows Stream Entry passage to final liberation. The Noble Truth experience opens to the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana.

Joy is stopping the self actor. I don't feel like I'm missing out on anything, but realize life without self-complications. Cessation is an actual joyful experience—what a relief not to suffer!

September 27—The Tranquility Enlightenment Aid*

“He develops Tranquility as a factor for Awakening—dependent on seclusion...dispassion...cessation, resulting in letting go.” SN 54, 2

As a final settling the three remaining Enlightenment Aids are a concentrated realization penetrating suffering’s end. With self-conceit and restlessness winding down, understanding and release as a sense-contacted renunciation as well as in craving’s cessation, the Tranquility Enlightenment Aid stands out. Together as an Enlightenment Aid discernment focused and experienced through seclusion, dispassion, release and cessation, the Tranquility Aid penetrates the Four Noble Truths deliverance insight.

The qualities of the Tranquility Enlightenment Aid as concentrated awareness are composure, ease, gentleness, patience, confidence and clear knowing. Now calmed, focused and Wisely Reflecting, acknowledge how the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are a misunderstanding, desire and a general confusion. Directed away from cravings’ compelling urgency as delight and pleasure, known is cessation from self-reference. Dispassion for sensual activity and composure for worldly activities is achieved. Turning away from the Conditions Arising turmoil, the Tranquility Aid abiding is experienced.

As a Tranquility absorption, note how the discursive monologue, persisting habitual energy and craved after intentions decline and fall mute. Disengaged, feel how the everyday impulse to act out settles. As a Wise Reflection, through renunciation and release Tranquility is known. Relief and a settled abiding stand out. Wisely Reflecting, detachment from self-identification continues as a natural extension of Insight Meditation. Seclusion, dispassion, release and cessation unite in the Tranquility Aid to detach from self-fixation and Sense Realm preoccupations. There is joy to be released from the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. As an intuitive recognition, acknowledge the release from self-conceit and accompanying restlessness.

Through the Tranquility Enlightenment Aid realize the First Noble Truth Signless Deliverance: self-suffering is known along with its corresponding causes.

The Second Noble Truth Desireless Deliverance: craving as a compelling urgency leads to suffering, one wisely turns away from self-promotion.

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The Third Noble Truth Emptiness Deliverance: with self-dominating habits reined in, Tranquility is known as craving is brought to cessation.

The Fourth Noble Truth as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind: the Middle Way Path is followed to its sublime end.

Acknowledge the relief as spaciousness and unburdening from self-domination. Misunderstanding (or ignorance) is lifted. Climaxing as seclusion, dispassion, release and cessation, the Enlightenment Aids are a Noble Truth realization for liberation. A fire gone out, a thirst quenched, a cooling down, the Tranquility Aid recognition established, self-reference and self-promotion cease. An active and personal realization, the Middle Way Path follows Stream Entry passage to final liberation. The Noble Truth experience opens to the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana.

Through the Tranquility Aid, I have the composure and insight to turn away from self-related actions.

September 28—The Concentration Enlightenment Aid*

“He develops Concentration as a factor for Awakening—dependent on seclusion...dispassion...cessation, resulting in letting go.” SN 54, 2

Together as an Enlightenment Aid discernment focused and experienced through seclusion, dispassion, release and cessation, the Concentration Aid penetrates the Four Noble Truths deliverance insight.

When desiring, angry, fatigued, restless or doubting, the Monkey Mind distractions as well as habit-reactions are a Pandora’s box of suffering potential. The mind flits about distracted by sensory onslaught and worldly pressures, escalating to craving and to suffering. Directed by the Concentration Aid, one discerns the Noble Truth breakthrough for cessation to penetrate the Unconditioned Realm.

Detaching from one-sided self-identification, feel the shift in the breath’s quality and attention to a calmed, refined revealing concentration. Habits exorcised, acknowledge how craving’s urgency dissipates and self-obsession falls away. Following on the undisturbed and restful moment, focus through the Concentration Aid to discern the Noble Truths liberating wisdom. Self-reference and associated conceptualization give way to an intuitive reflection.

Through the Concentration Enlightenment Aid realize the First Noble Truth Signless Deliverance: the self-hoax is revealed (the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification—body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention).

The Second Noble Truth Desireless Deliverance: craving’s role in suffering is realized, self-consuming habits fall away.

The Third Noble Truth Emptiness Deliverance: craving and the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle are made defunct.

The Fourth Noble Truth as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind: the Middle Way Path is fulfilled as the action to end all self-related action.

Acknowledge the relief as spaciousness and unburdening from self-domination. Misunderstanding (or ignorance) is lifted. Climaxing as seclusion, dispassion, release and cessation, the Enlightenment Aids are a Noble Truth realization for

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liberation. A fire gone out, a thirst quenched, a cooling down, the Concentration Aid recognition established, self-reference and self-promotion cease. An active and personal realization, the Middle Way Path follows Stream Entry passage to final liberation. The Noble Truth experience opens to the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana.

The full measure of my meditation experience, the Aids culminate in my realizing the Noble Truths end of suffering.

September 29—The Equanimity Enlightenment Aid*

“He develops Equanimity as a factor for Awakening—dependent on seclusion... dispassion... cessation, resulting in letting go.” SN 54, 2

As a final and unburdened settling, the Enlightenment Aids form as a liberating wisdom penetration. Together as an Enlightenment Aid discernment focused and experienced through seclusion, dispassion, release and cessation, the Equanimity Aid penetrates the Four Noble Truths deliverance insight.

Equanimity as a concentrated awareness is the product of renunciation, virtuous conduct, meditative composure, and insight penetration. The Equanimity Aid is a confidence, certainty, strength, well being and fulfillment from having shaken off all worldly derived distractions and self-related reference and promotion. Meditative composure, Wise Reflection and fulfillment are known. Resignation, blind acceptance, complacency, passivity and repression aren't to be confused with Equanimity. A deepened composure as well as assurance, and released from self-directed ambitions, there is nothing to prove, pursue, gain, sustain or uphold—one is equanimous. The habitual intentions of desire, hatred and harming entirely stopped, equanimity arises as a natural release from self-pursuits and justification. Equanimity follows insight as detachment. Without habits forming to crave, the Conditions Arising suffering cycle is nullified. One resides in the discerned Equanimity Aid relief and composure.

Settled and focused, the world's general unrest reflects how people are dominated and overwhelmed by self-deluded habitual impulses. Follow the moment as centered and quiet. Separated from Sense Realm upheaval, Equanimity is experienced as a Wise Reflection released from self-obsessed attachments.

Settled through renunciation and restraint and at ease, Equanimity is the peaceful release devoid of self-perspective and associated intentions. With self-identification dropped, note the relief, well being and fulfillment experienced from craving's cessation. Recognized are the conditions as causes and effects upholding a self-delusion. Unmoved by everyday challenges, adversities or distractions, Equanimity forms as a concentrated realization for the Noble Truths liberating significance and suffering's end.

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Through the Equanimity Enlightenment Aid realize the First Noble Truth Signless Deliverance: undisturbed and undistracted, insight for self-delusion is realized. The Ultimate Reality is discerned.

The Second Noble Truth Desireless Deliverance: self-transpiring causes and effects known, craving isn't taken up. The Ultimate Reality is discerned.

The Third Noble Truth Emptiness Deliverance: with craving subdued then falling away all together, suffering stops. The Ultimate Reality is discerned.

The Fourth Noble Truth as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind: the Noble Truths recognition turns to the Unconditioned Realm without self-reference or formed by conditions, causes and effects. The Ultimate Reality is discerned.

Acknowledge the relief as spaciousness and the unburdening from self-domination. Misunderstanding (or ignorance) is lifted. Climaxing as seclusion, dispassion, release and cessation, the Enlightenment Aids are a Noble Truth realization for liberation. A fire gone out, a thirst quenched, a cooling down, the Equanimity Aid recognition established, self-reference and self-promotion cease. An active and personal realization, the Middle Way Path follows to Stream Entry passage to final liberation. The Noble Truth experience opens to the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana.

Self is absurd and completely out of place. Abiding in equanimity, I distinguish the Noble Truths liberating wisdom.

September 30—Life and Death Extremes*

“When developed and pursued, is of great fruit and great benefit. It plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its final end. Therefore you should develop mindfulness of death.” AN 6, 19

Reflecting on death isn't morbid, but a Noble Truth recognition penetrating the rise and fall of action sequences rather than a misguided self-association. Paradoxically, Wisely Reflecting on death directs one to the 'Deathless' (the Unconditioned Realm) as the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle is discerned. A Middle Way appreciation, there is no obsession with birth as an eternal view or death as annihilation.

Life and death are limited by self-defined extremes. As a Middle Way appreciation and guidance not indulging or having hostility, the Noble Truth Purposeful Wisdom as non-self insight is realized. A Preliminary Understanding is the role played out by karmic intent for desire, ill will and harming, and Wise Understanding for the Noble Truths significance penetrates the self-illusion to suffering's end.

A self-identification misses the straight forward, true nature and Conditions Arising cycle. The present obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification is the sum of willed actions and craving after. Ultimately, everything is impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering (sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair), and of a non-self nature (Conditions Arising). The Four Noble Truths recognition is practical, present related, timeless, encouraging investigation, and Wisely Reflected. The Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind is realized.

Settled and focused as a present Wise Reflection, note the breath and physical qualities as well as mental states. Acknowledge how habits charge one as a craved after delight and pleasure to seek out desire, cling to a self-identity or attempt to flee. Follow as subconscious intentions flash and the mental monologue are restless. Acknowledge how self-identification goes on to promote craving. Never at rest, past habits flare up and carry over as craving to future consequences. As a Noble Truth recognition, the mistaken self-take for life and death is dropped. Discern the general dissatisfaction and how actions and expectations contribute to disappointment and suffering.

Habits slowly dispersing, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention) are no longer beguiling. Follow Wise Concentration uniting to focus as a Noble Truths Proper

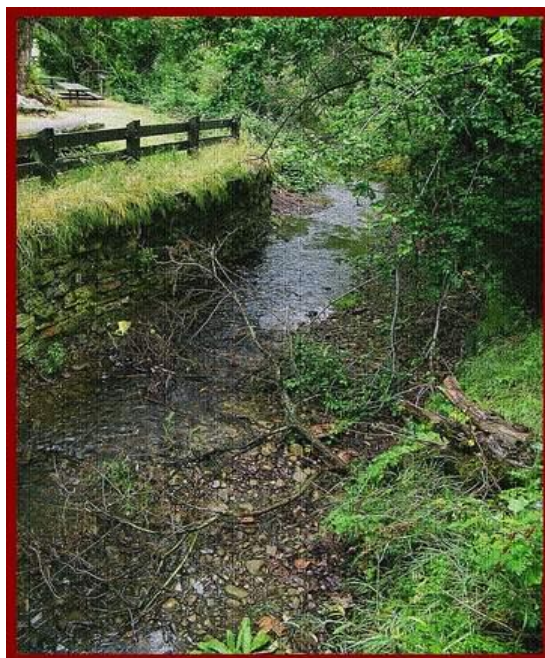
*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

Wisdom. Self-absorbed ways are released. The Ultimate Reality as unconditioned or 'deathless' stands out (not related to any Conditions Arising causes and effects). Seen and understood is how a self-deceived moment translates to suffering. The Middle Way Path is the action to end all self-related action. The misunderstood self-delusion clarified, suffering ceases as self-reference is dropped. Wisely Reflecting, one inclines to the 'Deathless' and the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana.

I've stepped away from the self-promoted cycle to not engage in life and death actions. I see how my intentions escalate to craving keeping me in line to suffer.



OCTOBER— Stream Entry Passage to Final Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance



Established in right conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path leads to Stream Entry passage and suffering's end. Unifying in intensity and refined insight, the Enlightenment Aids are a concentrated discernment to penetrate the Four Noble Truths liberating insight and realize the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana. Done away with is misunderstanding or ignorance (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self).

As though stirring from a deep sleep, some people wake up easily while others want to stay attached to their body/mind self-delusion a bit longer, and there are others whose habits are so consuming and dominating that they don't wake up at all. Everything comes down to how long one wants to be attached to a self-obsession.

Ten self-related habit fetters (as in being shackled and limited by a self-burden) remain. Within Stream Entry these 'fetters' are grouped into four wisdom realization stages. For each Stream Entry understanding there is a 'path' experience directing one and a 'fruit' experience ripening as wisdom recognition. Gleaned are the Noble Truths wisdom and liberation is known. Noble, mature and perfected, as an Accomplished One you fulfill the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path experience, realizing the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

- **Stream Enterer**—Directed towards wisdom-fulfillment, as a Stream Enterer eliminated are self-identity views, doubt and any uncertainty over the Noble Truths and Middle Way Path, along with any attachments for rites, rituals and

ceremonies. One is to be reborn no more than seven more times before final liberation. A Stream Enterer is consummate in conduct-virtue. Control and mastery over the underlying self-entangled karma within this present Sense Realm is known. The Middle Way conduct of Wise Speech, Wise Action and Wise Livelihood are emphasized. Followed is a Middle Way appreciation away from the self extremes for sensual indulgence and gratification as well as hostility and aggression.

- **Once Returner**—Here greed and hatred are weakened not to arise as frequently or as previously dominating. At this level of insight one returns ‘once’ more to a Sense Realm rebirth before liberation.
- **Non-Returner**—By completely eliminating greed/desire and hatred/aversion one never again returns to the Sense Realm, but to a higher rebirth and from there passes to the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana. The Non-Returner is consummate in meditation-concentration. Control and mastery over the underlying karma for craving as delight and pleasure is achieved.
- **Accomplished One**—Eliminated is self-associated craving and rebirth within the Fine-Material Realm; eliminated is self-associated craving and rebirth within the Immaterial Realm; self-associated conceit is eradicated; self-associated restlessness is eradicated; and, ultimately, misunderstanding (ignorance) is done away with (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self). An Accomplished One (Arhat) achieves the insight-wisdom, leading to the Four Noble Truths liberating breakthrough. Stream Entry access takes you from the present, worldly-shore beyond to the unconditioned liberated shore. The Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm are penetrated; Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

Focused and discerning, feel the breath’s quality, physical repose and one-pointed concentration turning away from self-obsession. The Middle Way Path joins with Stream Entry passage and the final deliverance from a misguided body/mind association for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Another self-version isn’t substituted, but the Noble Truths wisdom recognition is a freeing from deluded habit-fetters: self is suffering; craving leads to suffering consequences; craving’s cessation ends the suffering cycle; and the Middle Way Path is followed to deliverance.

Correctly discerning the body as compounded and joined elements (the Four Dynamics), feelings as sense-contacted impressions (pleasant, painful and neutral), the mind and mental states as flashing thought reactions (personal history), and life-actions directed as purposeful action (Conditions Arising causes and effects)—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self impersonal nature, the four grounded awareness factors aren’t taken as I, mine or as self (self-identity, craving or conceit).

Closer to a child turning away from and out growing his or her impulsive ways, Insight Meditation is a gradual maturing. Sense-contacted gratification and worldly pursuits are turned away from. The Middle Way Path experience converges as final Stream Entry passage. Acknowledge the poise and the relief as an intuitive understanding penetrates the Ultimate Reality. The self-burden is dropped and Stream Entry is followed to liberation. The hourglass-like of self-accumulated habits nearly empty, one inclines towards the Unconditioned Realm.

October 1—Self-Identity View*

“And what is the perception of not-self? There is the case where a [person] — having gone to the wilderness, to the shade of a tree, or to an empty building — reflects thus: ‘The eye is not-self, forms are not-self; the ear is not-self, sounds are not-self; the nose is not-self, aromas are not-self; the tongue is not-self, flavors are not-self; the body is not-self, tactile sensations are not-self; the intellect is not-self, ideas are not-self.’ Thus he remains focused on not-selfness with regard to the six inner and outer sense media. This is called the perception of non-self.” AN 10, 60

***“When you see with discernment,
‘All phenomena are non-self’—
you grow disenchanting with suffering.
This is the path to purity.” DH 279***

Having separated from the swiftly moving worldly floodwaters to the steady course Middle Way guidance and Stream Entry Passage, Insight Meditation takes one from self-involved to a Middle Way appreciation and suffering’s end. Stream Entry is grounded in strict conduct and virtue. Aware of every intended thought, speech and action and also controlling habitual impulses, the Noble Truths recognition is realized. Diligently followed and applied, the Middle Way Path brings one to liberation.

The Noble Truths clarify suffering as centered around the misperception for a body/mind obsession that is the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention are likened to bubbles, foam, a mirage, a plantain tree and a magic show—all an illusion without any separate or unique self (but rather Conditions Arising causes and effects as purposeful action). The I, me, mine self-attitude is divisive—judgmental, biased, selfish, greedy, hateful and confused. There is an imagined stand off between you and ‘others’ rather than seeing the sweeping actions creating a self-illusion.

The body is formed and nourished from external nutriment; feelings are engaged through external sense-contacted actions; perception forms around sensory impressions as a superficial recognition; mental reactions are clung to as personally associated experiences and projected on to situations; and conscious attention

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forms around mistaking life-action sequences a self-nature (without action there would be no consciousness). Life and reality are non-self briefly joined actions. Now be careful not to assume or make non-self into another version of self! Looking at the ocean you see a body of water is seen (but in fact, there are many droplets and interacting conditions). Looking in the mirror seen is 'one' body, but there is skin, skeleton, muscles, blood and organs as well as nourishing biological factors, while mentally there is a charge of feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention. Self is a gross misunderstanding.

Focused and discerning, follow the breath's quality. Relax the misconstrued self-identification. As a grounded awareness follow the true nature that is the body, feelings, mind and life-actions revealed as so many connected conditions, pressures, influences and elements. Meditation is an intuitive appreciation for life. For all its remarkable biology, the body weakens, succumbs and isn't to be taken as self. Through Insight Meditation one is a witness and observer rather than engaged and overwhelmed. Feelings arise with each and every moment as either pleasant, painful or neutral experiences. Following a Middle Way appreciation, disengage from judgments and bias as well as indifference to a deeper realization not formed around self. Turn to realize the present moment as formed by purposeful actions. Through a Middle Way appreciation life is recognized as conditioned actions rather than a self-fixed.

Following the breath awareness, acknowledge the shift away from self-associated stress. Revealed is craving after and pursuing a self-illusion. Now as a Stream Enterer consummate in conduct and virtue (Wise Speech, Wise Action and Wise Livelihood), indulgent and impulsive behavior settles to a discerning awareness. Feel the separation and release from sense-contacted reactions and dominating self-association. The mental dialogue quieting down, acknowledge how flaring subconscious habitual impulses weaken. The Noble Truths are experienced as a knowing and release. Worldly distractions are turned away from to be immersed in Stream Entry passage. Sense the detachment from a compromising self-view and actions. Feel the release from the mundane tendencies keeping one mired in self. No longer floundering or struggling, as a Stream Entry recognition and experience, one inclines towards the Unconditioned Realm.

Self is all I've known. I'm tormented and suffer as a result. But the Middle Way experience is directing me to freedom.

October 2—Confidence in the Four Noble Truths and Middle Way Path*

“Your duty is the contemplation, ‘This is [self] suffering...This is the origination of [self] suffering...This is the cessation of [self] suffering.’ Your duty is the contemplation, ‘This is the path of practice leading to the cessation of [self] suffering.’” SN 56, 44

“There are these three trainings under which they (the training rules) are all gathered. Which three? The training in heightened virtue, the training in heightened mind, the training in heightened discernment. These are the three trainings under which they are all gathered...” AN 3, 87

Stream Entry builds as a confidence, assurance and trust for the Noble Truths wisdom recognition and the Middle Way Path. Discerned is the true nature of life and reality without self-intrusion. Self-promoted actions and misperception are clarified. Any doubts, hesitations, questions or uncertainties are reconciled by way of personally insightful experiences.

Focused and discerning, follow the breath’s quality. As a deepening distinguishing, note how doubt and apprehension are quelled. Feel the stability as well as confidence and courage nurtured. A maturing realization and separation from reckless behavior and craving’s domination (for desire, self-identity and as an escape) is known. Reflecting the Noble Truths insight recognition and the Middle Way Path, acknowledge how uncertainty and insecurity abate. Life lessons are discerned and understood. Realized is a self-obsession and corresponding habits brings one to suffer.

Feel the shift away from the all-consuming and dominating Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle. Acknowledge the calmed breath, relaxed body and cleared attention. Discerned and affirmed are the Noble Truths clarifying wisdom and Middle Way Path directing you to deliverance. You are committed to seeing this liberating journey through to its end. Note how the one-sided self-perspective falls away. The Noble Truth vision and insight along with the Middle Way are a true merit and affirmation exorcising suffering. The self actor delusion is seen through realizing how craving’s urgency dominates.

Acknowledge the grounded relief, joy and fulfillment that are part of the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path and Stream Entry passage. The self extremes for indulgence

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and hostility no longer dominating, life had been carelessly and impulsively lived. There were angry scenes, harsh words, voices raised, fallouts, bitterness and hatred. Driven to tears, hysteria and nervous exhaustion, you were caught in the Conditions Arising vortex-like cycle. Over indulging in food, drugs, alcohol and anonymous sex were pitiful expressions. These actions were a plea for sanity, compassion, sobriety, abstinence and understanding. As a deepening insight, Wise Reflection along with renunciation and restraint, self-driven obsession is slowed.

The self actor succumbs to all the short-comings, pitfalls, disappointments and suffering related to self-delusion. Now aware, focused and abide as a Stream Enterer in strict conduct and virtue. There is no falling back to old careless habits. Knowing the many drawbacks and also having remorse, you are on high-alert for self antics. Without loathing or blame, one goes on through insight to be released from self-attraction. Acknowledge the joy as release and realized intuition. Matured, experienced and insightful, feel the relief and happiness that accompanies insight as assurance, fulfillment and equanimity. As a Stream Entry understanding and affirmation for the Four Noble Truths and Middle Way, you incline towards the Unconditioned Realm.

I have confidence in what I'm doing and where I'm headed. There are no more surprises as I follow the Middle Way Path. Well being and equanimity reside in me as I leave behind my self-obsession.

October 3—Rites and Rituals*

“There is the case where a [person] is virtuous, but not fashioned of [or defined by] virtue. He discerns, as it actually is, the awareness-release and discernment-release where his skillful habits cease without trace.” MN 78

Following the Middle Way Path to Stream Entry passage, rites and rituals are accepted for what they offer. More symbolic than substantial, the ceremonial side of religion or faith-based practices serves a purpose in establishing continuity, a degree of focus and helping foster dedication. But there are limits to rituals and services because they don't follow all the way to Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. The Four Noble Truths are a personal realization, directing you to nothing less than liberation and ending self-suffering's end.

The Five Wise Actions, for example, aren't a censorship but bring control as a awareness and responsibility for self-antics. The subconscious revealed, the Middle Way's strict conduct and virtue is emphasized through Wise Speech, Wise Action and Wise Livelihood. Conduct and virtue function to first quell impulsive habits as a clarified awareness then to the Noble Truths recognition.

As venerating as ceremonies are, they can be a barrier keeping one from personal insight. Caught up in the ritual sideshow, the practical and insightful are overlooked. Ceremonies are benefiting, but now the Noble Truths require a complete clarity, energy and discerning focus. Unintentionally, rituals can uphold a self-ideal. Again the nobility and usefulness aren't questioned, but rituals and ceremonies only serve as a springboard to greater insight.

Focused and discerning, through the breath's awareness acknowledge how Insight Meditation and the Middle Way guidance have brought a stability, poise and a personal recognition. The breath and body calmed, the mind naturally follows to a deepening non-self, impersonal insight. Acknowledge what it is to be free of the proverbial 300 pound self-gorilla on your back. Feel as the impulsive burden and gravity for habits as well as craving after weaken. Dropped is the self-conflicted baggage carried and continually given birth to as a self actor.

The hourglass-like of accumulated habits empties and self-obsession diminishes. Follow as Wise Reflection intensifies. Sense how the all-consuming self-notion is released. Acknowledge the relief as craving's domination stops. A non-self

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recognition and cessation from self-absorbed habits is known. Through Wise Reflection, renunciation and restraint, the Noble Truths are realized and the full scope of the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path applied (Wise Understanding, Wise Intention, Wise Speech, Wise Action, Wise Livelihood, Wise Effort, Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration). There is no blind faith here, but personal recognition for how craving generates suffering consequences. Think of motives like struck matches. Actions ignite more flames which carry over and suffering blazes. As a Stream Entry understanding and intuitive experience for rites and rituals, you incline towards the Unconditioned Realm.

As I move ahead, I have control over my compromising habits. I make the effort to stay on course. It all comes down to me.

October 4—Self-Identity View Clarified as ‘Fruit’ Ripening to Wisdom*

“He does not assume form to be the self, or the self as possessing form, or form as in the self, or the self as in form. He does not assume feeling to be the self...He does not assume perception to be the self...He does not assume fabrications to be the self...He does not assume consciousness to be the self, or the self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in the self, or the self as in consciousness. This is how self-identity does not come about.”
MN 41

Connected as a grounded awareness for the breath and body, feelings, mind and life-actions, acknowledge the domination and hold self-identity view has. Through a self-obsession, life and reality are distorted and suffering follows. Acknowledge how subconscious habits absorb and undermine actions. Follow how self-related stress and tension radiates through the breath on down throughout the entire body. Relax the furrowed brow and allow the jaw to drop, stretching facial muscles. Sense how self-attachment compresses at the chest as well as how abdominal and pelvic areas are clenched. Note how the mind narrows around a self-fixation. Relax and release the many hotspots that reveal clinging as self-identification. Allow the hourglass-like of self-accumulated habits to empty.

Focused and discerning, note how sense-contacted actions are generated through the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and touch. Sense impressions (forms, sounds, smells, taste, and tactile) give way to feelings (pleasant, painful and neutral) and then go on to escalate as craving (for desire, a self-identity or as an escape). Note how you are dominated by a one-sided self-deception dominates.

Follow the subconscious mental dialogue and how habits arise to form leading to impulsive reactions. Dormant habits are the greed, hatred and confusion fermenting in as karmic potential; active habits are the recurring jabbering voice as habit impulse come to mind; and transgressing habits are acted on as habitual intentions. Through Insight Meditation and the Middle Way Path (specifically Wise Intention and Wise Effort), recognize how self-deceived role playing dominates.

Connected as a Noble Truths wisdom recognition, penetrate the involved conditions related to the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention). Self is a gross distortion. Put in proper context, self-identity doesn't jive with the true nature of life and reality (impermanent,

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dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action). Follow as the Noble Truth distinguishing insight clarifies the self-view. Turned away from are worldly pursuits, long standing habitual associations and the body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification.

Problems and suffering exist on three levels revealing a self-centered connection. First, the day-to-day inconveniences one goes through as well as Murphy's Law of things just not going right. Second, there exists the suffering and problems brought about by change and the short-term nature of all experiences. And third, is the more pervasive suffering brought on by a habitual self-nature and body/mind self-obsession.

The hourglass-like of accumulated habits slowly emptying, acknowledge how self-association decreases. Note the relief as craving's compelling urgency eases. A non-self recognition and cessation from self-absorbed habits is realized. Follow as Wise Reflection intensifies. Calmed and distinguished, the Four Noble Truths profound insights and the Middle Way Path direct one through Stream Entry passage. Recognized is how a mistaken self-view is a burden and suffering. The Middle Way Path not connected to self extremes is followed. Experience firsthand how the Four Noble Truths relate to life and expose a self-charade. Beyond intellect or reasoning, a personal experience consolidates as wisdom.

The Middle Way conduct-virtue (Wise Speech, Wise Action and Wise Livelihood) stand out as Stream Enterer qualities. Impeccable, responsible and uncompromising, there is remorse for realizing the drawbacks of self-inclined habitual actions. Virtuous and beyond reproach, settle into the present Stream Entry passage. Wisely Reflecting, an intuition is experienced for the Noble Truths clarification and Middle Way Path deliverance.

The Noble Truth liberating wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness discerns life and reality without a self-perspective; Investigation penetrates impermanence, the Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action as non-self (the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one'); Energy removes detrimental self-directed mental states while developing beneficial mental states; Rapture emerges from renunciation and restraint and turns away from dissatisfying worldly involvements; Tranquility arises to detach from self-obsession; Concentration focuses as a Noble Truths clarifying insight; and Equanimity is experienced as relief and release removed from a self-focus.

Following Stream Entry passage one inclines towards the Ultimate Reality, the Unconditioned Realm.

Impossible to satisfy, self is suffering. Now I turn away from the self-charade to see life and reality as they truly are.

October 5—Confidence and Assurance as ‘Fruit’ Ripening to Wisdom*

“Those who have faith in the Noble Eightfold Path have faith in the best; and for those who have faith in the best, the best result will be theirs.” AN 4, 34

As suffering diminishes confidence and trust for the Noble Truths and Middle Way are personally verified and experienced. When suffering strikes, it is because the Noble Truths haven’t been realized nor the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path fully experienced. Properly applied wisdom isn’t a trophy given out, but comes as a personal insight and release from self-suffering. With the Four Noble Truths and Middle Way Path directing awareness, wisdom matures as insight to know life and reality as a personal recognition.

As a Stream Enterer consummate in strict conduct and virtue, realized are how charged habits are overwhelming. Stepping away from self-exploits and downfalls, the Noble Truths recognition and Middle Way appreciation put life into proper context. The preliminary function of the Middle Way is a moral guidance and karmic correction, but through the Four Noble Truths Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance as insight penetrates craving’s cessation and eliminates suffering.

Focused and discerning, follow the breath’s quality. Calmed and distinguishing, acknowledge how the Noble Truth insight and following the Middle Way Path has brought one to Stream Entry passage. Assured and perseverant, affirmation of the Noble Truths and Middle Way matures and deepens.

The hourglass-like of self-accumulated habits slowly emptying, acknowledge self-attachments diminishing. Note the relief as craving’s compelling urgency eases. A non-self recognition and cessation from self-absorbed habits is known. Follow as Wise Reflection intensifies. Calmed and distinguished, the Four Noble Truths profound insights and the Middle Way Path direct one through Stream Entry passage. Realized is how a mistaken view for self is a burden and suffering. Follow the Middle Way Path not side-tracked by self extremes for indulgence and gratification or hostility and aggression. Experience firsthand how the Four Noble Truths relate to life and expose a self-charade. Beyond intellect or reasoning, a personal experience consolidates as wisdom.

The Middle Way conduct-virtue (Wise Speech, Wise Action and Wise Livelihood) standout as Stream Enterer qualities. Impeccable, responsible and

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uncompromising, there is remorse for realizing the drawbacks of self-inclined habitual actions. Virtuous and beyond reproach, settle into the present Stream Entry passage. Wisely Reflecting, an intuition is experienced for the Noble Truths clarification and Middle Way Path deliverance.

The Noble Truth liberating wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness follows the Middle Way appreciation separated from self extremes; Investigation continues as a deepening Noble Truth clarifying recognition; Energy as the Middle Way application of conduct (Wise Speech, Action and Livelihood); Rapture emerges from renunciation and restraint to a Noble Truth insight withdrawing from worldly consumed entanglements; Tranquility arises as the Middle Way Path experience is fulfilled; Concentration focuses as an affirmation of the Noble Truths; and Equanimity is known as contentment from realizing suffering's end.

Following Stream Entry passage one inclines towards the Ultimate Reality, the Unconditioned Realm.

Through the Four Noble Truths recognition and Middle Way guidance my suffering is curbed. Now I follow the Path to its end.

October 6—Rites and Rituals released as ‘Fruit’ Ripening to Wisdom*

“[The enlightened person] doesn’t speak of purity in terms of view, learning, knowledge, precept and practice. Nor is it found by a person through lack of view, of learning, of knowledge, of precept or practice. Letting these go, without grasping, one is independent, at peace.” SN 4, 9

Honest evaluation and serious effort are required. However helpful, rites and rituals fall short and are unable to bring you to Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. A personal experience as insight goes on to blossom, discerning self-obsession and applying the Five Wise Actions accordingly. The Middle Way Path is all about bringing an end to self-suffering. You are dedicated to the insights meditation has allowed and to fulfilling the Middle Way Path.

Responsible for one’s actions (goodwill, honesty, generosity, abstinence and sobriety), realized are how careless and impulsive one was before in life. Seen is how the self actor expresses itself through desire, hatred and confusion. Rites and rituals put one on course to meaningful changes and a deeper awareness, but remain at the ‘ritual’ level giving a false sense of security still tied to a self-illusion. The Four Noble Truths and Middle Way Path are a Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

Focused and discerning, follow the breath’s quality. Calmed and distinguishing, acknowledge how the Noble Truth insight and following the Middle Way Path brings one to Stream Entry passage. Assured and perseverant, affirmation of the Noble Truths and Middle Way matures and deepens.

The hourglass-like of self-accumulated habits slowly emptying, acknowledge how self-attachments have diminished. Note the relief as craving’s compelling urgency easing. A non-self recognition and cessation from self-absorbed habits is known. Follow as Wise Reflection intensifies. Calmed and distinguished, the Four Noble Truths profound insight and the Middle Way Path direct one through Stream Entry passage. Realized is how a mistaken self-view is a burden and suffering. Follow the Middle Way Path not side-tracked by self extremes for indulgence and gratification or hostility and aggression. Experience firsthand how the Four Noble Truths relate to life and expose the self-charade. Beyond intellect or reasoning, a personal experience consolidates as wisdom.

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The Middle Way conduct-virtue (Wise Speech, Wise Action and Wise Livelihood) stand out as Stream Enterer qualities. Impeccable, responsible and uncompromising, there is remorse for realizing the drawbacks of self-inclined habitual actions. Virtuous and beyond reproach, settle into the present Stream Entry passage. Wisely Reflecting, an intuition is experienced for the Noble Truths clarification and Middle Way Path deliverance.

The Noble Truths liberating wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness as a realistic view for rites and rituals; Investigation discerns ceremonial nobility but also their limitations; Energy is applied as a continuous effort in following the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path; Rapture emerges as renunciation and restraint applied through the Middle Way; Tranquility is a detachment from self-obsession; Concentration focuses to connect with the Four Noble Truths recognition and the Middle Way guidance; and Equanimity is known as confirmation of the Middle Way Path experience.

Following Stream Entry passage one inclines towards the Ultimate Reality, the Unconditioned Realm.

The whole of Insight Meditation and the Middle Way direct me to a Noble Truth wisdom recognition—liberation from and ending suffering.

October 7—Once Returner (weakening greed and hatred)*

“With the utter destruction of the [first] three fetters and the attenuation of greed, hatred and delusion he becomes a once-returner, who comes back to this world only once more and then makes an end to suffering.” AN 3, 85

Established in strict conduct and virtue, meditation and concentration mature to a Once-Returner recognition weakening greed and hatred. Following the Middle Way Wise Intention, desire and aversion don't arise as frequently or as previously dominant. As part of the Three Poisons, greed and hatred are coarse Sense Realm characteristics. The pervading confusion of misunderstanding or ignorance is eradicated in the final breakthrough as an Accomplished One. At this present level of insight one is only to return 'once' more to a Sense Realm rebirth before liberation. As a Wise Intention, applied is renunciation for desire while goodwill weakens hatred.

Seemingly settled and without overt greed or hatred, nevertheless dormant, active and transgressing habits persist. Grounded in the awareness for body, feelings, mind and life-actions, follow the breath's quality for desire's and hatred's affects. Sense how restricted the body is (facial muscles drawn, jaw clenched, chest heavy and breathing closer to suffocation as well as abdominal and pelvic pressure). Acknowledge how the self actor responds with desire and hatred taking the body, feelings, mental states and life-actions as self. Inconvenienced and frustrated, greed and aversion arise from a self-obsession. This present Sense Realm experience is tied to a mistaken attachment for a body/mind identification.

Greed Weakened

“The Once-Returner and one practicing for the realization of the fruit of once-returner [eradicating greed]...” AN 8, 19

As a present awareness, acknowledge how greed is unsettling. Desire as a sense-contacted provocation is exciting and compels one to seek after more. An unending need for gratification is overwhelming. Feel how the breathing is tight with anticipation. Note how the mind narrows to search. Following the breath's quality, sense where the body is stressed (facial muscles, chest and abdomen). Allow the hourglass-like habitual buildup to slowly free-up and disperse. Recognize how desire arises from sense impressions, feelings then go on to be affected, escalating

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to craving as delight and pleasure, and leading to compromising consequences. Follow how subconsciously intentions promote self-actions. Through a Middle Way appreciation, note the shift away from greed and desire. Sense how the body relaxes and the mind settles. Feel the hourglass-like of self-accumulated habits dispersing.

As a Middle Way experience, renunciation is applied as an intention or forethought to prevent sensory stimulation from escalating to sensual desire. Eyes/forms, ears/sounds, nose/scents, tongue/tastes, and tactile/touch—each sense contact impression is a separate action mistaken as a self-related experience. Cultivating Wise Intention as recognition for provoking habits, the Middle Way appreciation is followed taking control of subconsciously emerging impulses.

Wisely Reflecting, acknowledge the role intentions have on life. Acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing flow of desire forming as self-promoted action. Settling in concentrated awareness, feel the emergence of patience. Assume control of thoughts to direct your intention and actions. Self-intention waning, note how perception softens through renunciation. Desire disperses. The run away self-obsession curbed, craving is mindfully prevented. A Middle Way appreciation stands out. A guarded awareness, renunciation and restraint are a reasonable way to live simply, honestly, and responsibly. As a Noble Truth recognition, non-self insight is discerned as well as the Conditions Arising life-action patterns.

Desire is less dominating now. I see how I crave after sensual gratification to fulfill a self-fantasy.

October 8—Hatred Weakened*

“The Once-Returner and one practicing for the realization of the fruit of once-returner [eradicating hatred]...” AN 8, 19

Confronted by challenging situations, persons or by negative thoughts, hatred springs up. The present becomes a battleground. Aware that one’s attention has lapsed, refocus to connect with the breath’s quality. Feel how breathing is labored. Tension increases at the forehead, around the eyes and clenched jaw. Temples pounding, mouth dry, a constricting pressure at the chest, stomach souring, blood pressure and pulse rate soar. Hatred and anger are like painful electric shocks. Impatient and frustrated, a self-identification dominates. As a Wise Intention, hateful and angry ways are renounced and Wise Effort as goodwill is applied.

As a present awareness, acknowledge how hatred is unsettling as anger stemming from a sense-contacted experience that is challenge and realize how expectations aren’t met. Feel how the breath tightens with anticipation. Note how the mind narrows in judgment and anger, leaving one pained. Following the breath’s quality, note where the body is stressed (facial muscles, chest or abdomen). Allow the hourglass-like habitual buildup to slowly free-up and disperse. Recognize how hatred arises then craving for a different outcome leads to compromising consequences. Through a Middle Way appreciation, note the shift away from hostility and aggression. Follow how the body relaxes and the mind settles. Feel the hourglass-like of self-accumulated habits dispersing.

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Ill will is like a storm upsetting life. The consequences are negative feelings, frustration, aversion and rancor raging as enmity. Feel the turmoil as the heart pounds, head throbs, breathing is labored, blood pressure up, and adrenaline races. Note how thoughts painfully narrow. Anger is suffocating and stifling. Acknowledge how hatred derails one. Note how distractions, habits, impulsive behavior, and self-reactions dominate. Follow how inconvenience and frustration turn to dislike and aggression. Be patient. Follow the breath's quality and also how the body recoils as the breath sputters in short, tense gasps. Connected with the present breath quality, awareness weakens ill will. An intuitive Middle Way appreciation without hostility or aggression takes over. Ill will's charge is slowly released.

Wisely Reflecting, acknowledge the role intentions have on life. Acknowledge the dormant, active and transgressing flow of hatred forming as self-promoted action. Settling in concentrated awareness, feel the emergence of patience. Assume control of your thoughts to direct intention and actions. Self-intention waning, note how perception softens through renunciation. Hatred disperses. Run away self-obsession curbed, craving after is mindfully prevented. A Middle Way appreciation stands out. Guarding awareness, renunciation and restraint are a reasonable way to live simply, honestly, and responsibly. As a Noble Truth recognition, non-self insight is discerned as well as the Conditions Arising forming patterns.

I'm not angry like I was before. I have patience and am not given to outbursts. I see how I was affected as a self actor to fits and outrage.

October 9—Greed Weakened as ‘Fruit’ Ripening to Wisdom*

“...with the destruction of the [first] three fetters and with the attention of lust...are Once-Returners, returning once to this world to make an end of suffering...they too will get safely across to the futher shore.” MN 34

Following the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage, conduct and virtue as well as meditation and concentration mature as a Once-Returner recognition. Wise Intention and Wise Effort are straightforward and intuitive insight.

Excited like a wide-eyed child, greed and desire are unfulfilling. But having patience, renunciation and restraint, conduct and concentration follow a Middle Way appreciation not connected to self extremes. Realize how craving’s burdened as delight and pleasure then carry over to suffering consequences. As a deepening Noble Truth recognition, self-obsession is exposed as dissatisfying and suffering.

Feel the shift and tranquility to pull back from physical activity and sensory stimulation. Habits and indulgences are an attempt to fulfill a self-desired identification. Through renunciation and restraint, release the attachments and charged habitual impulses for greed. The subconscious revealed, note how desiring impressions flash and intentions surge escalating to craving. Transferring over at every instance are dormant, active and transgressing greedy impulses compelling the self actor experience. Slowly releasing greedy habits, the Conditions Arising causes and effects suffering cycle isn’t engaged.

Following the breath’s quality self-associated greed is dropped and the Noble Truth clarifying recognition for craving is realized. Acknowledge the relief as Wise Reflection intensifying to weaken greed. The Middle Way Wise Intention joins with Wise Effort to stop and prevent detrimental mental states while allowing for beneficial mental states. Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration follow as a settling discernment for how craving falls away. As a Once-Returner insight ripens to weaken self-identified greed and desire related to Sense Realm activity. The Noble Truths distinguishing insight stands out. Feel how greed disperses and desire’s urgency falls away. Craving as a delight and pleasure is subdued. Acknowledge the relief and release to abide in equanimity. Note how the body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification drops. Follow as a clarified recognition emerges to penetrate self-illusion and know the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle.

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The Noble Truths liberating wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness as a Noble Truth recognition discerns self-involved desire and greed; Investigation penetrates the self-illusion and subconscious underlying habits compelling craving; Energy follows the Middle Way Wise Intention and Wise Effort cutting off craving as desire; Rapture emerges as renunciation and restraint removed from dissatisfying worldly involved experiences; Tranquility is the relief and release from craved after desire; Concentration focuses to realize the Noble Truths cessation for craving (for desire, self-identity, and as an escape); and through Equanimity craving's release as fulfillment is know.

Following Stream Entry passage one inclines towards the Ultimate Reality, the Unconditioned Realm.

It's been a gradual maturing and realization to control my desiring. Weakened now, I see how desire escalates to craving, bringing me to suffering. I'm not taken in by my self-antics.

October 10—Hatred Weakened as ‘Fruit’ Ripening to Wisdom*

“...with the destruction of the [first] three fetters and with the attention of hatred...are Once-Returners, returning once to this world to make an end of suffering...they too will get safely across to the futher shore.” MN 34

Following the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage, conduct and virtue as well as meditation and concentration mature as a Once-Returner recognition. Wise Intention and Wise Effort are straightforward and intuitive insight.

Like stepping on hot coals, hatred and anger are a self-associated upset, torment and backlash. Discerned is a self-absorbed attitude leading to suffering. Having goodwill and patience, conduct and concentration follow a Middle Way appreciation not connected with self extremes. Realize how one is burdened by craving as delight and pleasure, carrying over to suffering consequences. As a deepening Noble Truth recognition, self-obsession is exposed as dissatisfying and suffering.

Feel the shift and tranquility to pull back from physical activities and sensory stimulation. Habits and indulgences seek to fulfill a self-identification. Through renunciation and restraint, release the attachments and charged habitual impulses for hatred. The subconscious revealed, note how hateful impressions flash and intentions surge escalating to craving. Transferring over at every instance are dormant, active and transgressing hateful impulses compelling self response. Slowly releasing hateful habits, the Conditions Arising causes and effects suffering cycle isn't engaged.

Following the breath's quality self-associated hatred is dropped and the Noble Truth clarifying recognition for craving is realized. Acknowledge the relief as Wise Reflection intensifies weakening hatred. The Middle Way Wise Intention joins with Wise Effort to stop and prevent detrimental mental states while allowing for beneficial mental states. Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration follow as a settled discernment as craving falls away. As a Once Returner, insight ripens to weaken hatred and aversion related to Sense Realm activity. A Noble Truths distinguishing insight stands out. Feel how hatred disperses and loathing fall away. Craving as a delight and pleasure is subdued.

Acknowledge the relief and release as an abiding equanimity. Note how the body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification drops.

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Follow as a clarified recognition emerges to penetrate self-illusion and know the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle.

The Noble Truth liberating wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Aids; Awareness as a Noble Truth recognition discerns self-involved hatred and anger: Investigation penetrates the self-illusion and subconscious underlying habits compelling craving; Energy follows the Middle Way Wise Intention and Wise Effort cutting off craving as an escape or hatred; Rapture emerges as renunciation and restraint removed from dissatisfying worldly involved experiences; Tranquility is the relief and release from craved after hatred; Concentration focuses to realize the Noble Truths cessation for craving (for desire, self-identity, and as an escape); and through Equanimity craving's release as fulfillment is known.

Following Stream Entry passage one inclines towards the Ultimate Reality, the Unconditioned Realm.

I know all too well my hatred and anger. No longer am I put off or provoked. My self-identification has weakened.

October 11—Non-Returner (Greed and Hatred Eliminated)*

“Without having given up six qualities, one will be incapable of realizing the fruit of non-returning...Lack of faith, lack of moral shame, lack of moral dread, laziness, lack of mindfulness and lack of wisdom. But by giving up these six qualities one will be capable of realizing the fruit of Non-Returner.” AN 6, 65

By completely eliminating greed/desire and hatred/aversion you are never again to return to a human existence, but to a higher rebirth and from there pass to liberation and the Unconditioned Realm. The Non-Returner is consummate in meditation-concentration. Control and mastery over underlying driving karma and associated craving in the Sense Realm is achieved. Connected as a noble practitioner through the Middle Way Path to Stream Entry passage, one matures to eradicate greed and hatred down to the dormant level.

Personally penetrated, acknowledge the self-burden. A deepening realization of the Four Noble Truths, discerned are the causes and effects driving one as a self actor. Dropped is the attachment for a body/mind identification. Non-self insight and cessation from self-promoted actions stand out. Having mistaken and misunderstood life and reality, penetrate how the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification as conditions, pressures, influences and elements arise and fade.

Greed Eliminated

“Loving-Kindness, if developed in such a way, will lead to the state of Non-Returner...” AN 10, 208

From sense-contacted reactions, note how a sought out desire escalates to craving and suffering consequences. Already weakened through a Noble Truth recognition, self-absorbed desire is cut off: greed and desire are suffering; sense-contact impressions carry over to craving as delight and pleasure; craving stopped, suffering stops; and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to deliverance. Note how subconscious compromising thoughts are subdued. Acknowledge the shift away from Sense Realm involvement to an intensified Wise Reflection. Craving’s cessation is experienced as a relief and release; the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle defunct. A penetrating recognition along with control over impulsive reactions, self-preoccupied desire is dropped. Renunciation and restraint as Wise Intention and Wise Effort transform dormant mental states. Established in the

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Middle Way conduct and virtue as well as meditation and concentration, a Noble Truth recognition clarifies life.

Through Insight Meditation subconscious patterns and thought formations are revealed. A Middle Way meditation-concentration focuses as one-pointed clarity discerning greed and desire. All that remains is the final but substantial habit fetter of confusion as misunderstanding (or ignorance) keeping one tied to suffering. Follow as the Noble Truth recognition intensifies as Wise Reflection. The hourglass-like of accumulated habits releases and the self-associated character falls away.

The relief is great, the insight profound as self-directed desire is discerned. Wisely Reflecting, note how greed, lust and desire give way, subside and are released. Wise Intention as renunciation and restraint serving one well, you have the insight-wisdom not to react and indulge sense-contacted actions as a self actor. Realized is the Conditions Arising cycle leading to self-promoted being.

This present body/mind manifestation is the last Sense Realm rebirth. Feel the cooling down and release from sensory agitation and the accompanying impulsiveness, craving wanes as karmic urgency diminishes. The mental dialogue quieting, a personal recognition stands out. With the elimination of desire, one no longer returns to the challenging human realm, but abides in the distinguishing Pure Abodes (though less suffering is nevertheless impermanent and marked by a subtle self-association). Followed is the Middle Way Path of blameless conduct-virtue and discerning meditation-concentration.

The Noble Truths insight clarify reality—self-obsession is suffering; craving after as delight and pleasure carries over to suffering consequences; craving ceasing, suffering ends; and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to deliverance.

Controlled, realized and insightful, there is only one final rebirth before Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. Stream Entry passage is followed to final release as an Accomplished One.

I don't have the compulsion anymore tied to greed and desire. I'm settled and able to see through my self-involved actions.

October 12—Hatred Eliminated*

“Loving-Kindness, if developed in such a way, will lead to the state of Non-Returning...” AN 10, 208

The dormant hatred remaining is a subtle impatience and low-level indignation. The mental dialogue reveals an underlying tension of dislike and dissatisfaction played out as frustration or unhappiness. The self actor wants things his or her way, gets annoyed, and rages when inconvenienced or challenged.

As a sense-impressed reaction, note how you incline to and engage in hatred, escalating to craving as an escape or avoidance, and leading to suffering consequences. Already weakened as a Noble Truth recognition, Sense Realm related hatred is cut off: hatred is suffering; frustration carries over to craving as an escape; craving stopped, suffering ends; and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to deliverance. Note how subconscious and compromising thoughts are subdued. Acknowledge the shift away from Sense Realm preoccupation and involvement to an intensified Wise Reflection. Craving's cessation is experienced as a relief and release; the Conditions Arising causes and effects suffering cycle defunct. A penetrating recognition along with control over actions, self-absorbed hatred is turned away from. Goodwill and caring as Wise Intention, Wise Effort transforms dormant mental states. Established in the Middle Way conduct-virtue and meditation-concentration, the Noble Truths recognition clarifies life.

Through Insight Meditation subconscious patterns and thought formations are revealed. A Middle Way meditation-concentration focuses as one-pointed clarity discerning hatred and aversion. All that remains is the final but substantial habit fetter of confusion as misunderstanding (or ignorance) keeping one tied to suffering. Follow as the Noble Truth recognition intensifies as Wise Reflection. The hourglass-like of accumulated habits releases and the self-associated character falls away.

The relief is great, the insight profound as self-directed hatred is discerned. Wisely Reflecting, note how hatred and aversion give way, subside and are released. Wise Intention as goodwill and caring serving one well, you have the insight-wisdom not to react and indulge sense-contacted actions as a self actor. Realized is the Conditions Arising cycle leading to self-promoted being.

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This present body/mind manifestation is the last Sense Realm rebirth. Feel the cooling down and release from sensory agitation and the accompanying impulsiveness, craving wanes as karmic urgency diminishes. Mental dialogue quieting, a personal recognition stands out. With the elimination of hatred, one no longer returns to the challenging human realm, but abides in the distinguishing Pure Abodes (though less suffering is nevertheless impermanent and marked by a subtle self-association). Followed is the Middle Way Path of blameless conduct-virtue and discerning meditation-concentration.

The Noble Truths insight clarify reality—self-obsession is suffering, craving after as delight and pleasure carries over leading to suffering consequences; craving ceasing, suffering ends; the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to deliverance.

Controlled, realized and insightful, there is only one final rebirth before Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. Stream Entry passage is followed to final release as an Accomplished One.

Self-indignation is dropped. All my defensiveness for and around self, hatred and anger have ended.

October 13—The Immeasurables (loving-kindness, compassion, shared joy and equanimity) Weakening Greed and Hatred*

“When one develops—mindful—goodwill without limit, fetters are worn through, on seeing the ending of acquisitions.” IT 27

Self is one-sided, limiting, without care, greedy, hateful and motivated only to further its own interest, status and position. Stressful, tormenting, painful and suffering, recognize the symptoms of facial tension, eye pressure, clenched jaw, headaches, hunched over shoulders, chest compressed, nervous stomach and digestive problems as well as pelvic pain. Most illnesses are self-induced. The Immeasurables of loving-kindness, compassion, shared joy and equanimity heal, bring insight for life and transform a habitual nature. Rather than struggling, embrace the moment as an engaged awareness. Wise Intention is directed by the powerful application of the Immeasurables while through Wise Effort detrimental states are dispelled and beneficial mental states are promoted. Wise Concentration then comes into focus as a Noble Truth recognition that isn't self-defined.

Loving-Kindness

***“Just as water cools both good and bad,
And washes away all impurity and dust,
In the same way you should develop thoughts of love
To friend and foe alike,
And having reached perfection in love,
You will attain enlightenment.” JN 168-169***

Loving-kindness is a powerful realization, at once healing, transforming and all encompassing. Motives or karma are redirected from a self-centered person to being receptive, flexible, generous, patient, willing, open and accepting. Proceeding slowly, the hurt or injustice aren't forgotten, but there is forgiveness and an acceptance to move on.

Suffering through many years of wounds, betrayals, anger, upsets and being defensive, healing and transformation don't come over night. Before ever caring for someone else, there first must be patience, gentleness and caring for one's self.

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After doing a brief body scan, draw awareness inward as a Wise Reflection. Note how the breath naturally slows, body calms, feelings settle and the mind follows to quiet down. Here caring and goodwill are established. Follow the calm permeating through the body as well as the mind clearing. Removed from stressful responsibilities and everyday challenges, take a moment to connect with caring and gentleness. Realize that joy and happiness are also part of life.

Note how gentleness softens and opens areas that had been tense and difficult. Feel the emergence of goodwill, caring, patience and acceptance. Follow how loving-kindness pervades over the body and soothes the mind. Note the changes in the breath's quality as well as attention opening up. Kindness and benevolence transform the self actor and habitual tendencies.

Following how the energy of loving-kindness is brought up. Try offering and extending the same concern to a family member, friend or acquaintance. While meditating, take the time to relate to the other person. Feel the shared and caring bonds. Realize the connection to others.

Loving-kindness is a powerful experience, at once healing and transforming. A one-sided self-focus is reshaped; from one-dimensional to being receptive, flexible, generous and willing.

Compassion

"...your heart must bear no hatred, you must utter no unkind words, you must always be compassionate." MN 21

Compassion shouldn't be confused with pity or sorrow as placing a value judgment on someone's misery. When compassionate you sympathize, care, understand and share in the other person's problems and hardships. Having passed through similar ordeals, relate to the other person as a connected awareness and caring.

Through compassion, feel how you move away from aggressive ways. Known all too well are the lessons learned from suffering to now go on to better related with others. A compassionate closure heals past wounds and sorrows. Knowing the profound and life-altering depths of compassion, acknowledge the release involved and how peace is cultivated.

Caring and having sympathy, compassion is extended to one's self. Follow how the body calms and the mind opens in empathy as pent-up sorrows are released. Anger and disappointment lifting, you move away from a self-centered perspective to know compassion.

Compassionately connected, the past is forgiven. Accepting and forgiving of one's self, acceptance and forgiveness of others is known. Knowing compassion's depths, realize how self-attachment has held you back. Bitterness and anger dropped, acknowledge peace.

Offer compassion to others the world over. Touching and affecting everyone, embrace all sorrow-stricken and suffering beings—including one's self.

Shared Joy

***“Wishing: In gladness and in safety,
May all beings be at ease!” SN I, 8***

Shared Joy or gladness is a happiness for another person's good fortune, success as well as their well being. The other person is seen favorably and as a friend. Emerging from a self-shell there is caring, acceptance and being open minded. The simplest of virtues, one is happy, connected, and shares with others. Sympathetic, caring is established as a unifying bond.

Feel how light-hearted, at ease and content it is to not focus as a self actor. Resentment, bitterness and jealousy fall away. Happy in life, experience opens to a genuine acceptance for others and their well-being. Everyone is seen as a friend. Caring and joyful, self-pretense is dropped and concern increases.

Equanimity

“When his mind is concentrated he looks upon all things with thorough equanimity. This is called equanimity as a part of enlightenment.”

Equanimity is a natural conclusion to the Immeasurables, reflecting fulfillment and peace in life. Not self-involved, experiences, thoughts and feelings, goodwill is shared with everyone. Calm and tranquil, equanimity reflects a mindful and wisely-lived life as even-tempered, patient and accepting. Everything and everyone is held in equal regard and esteem.

Feel equanimity through the breath, body and mind, noting goodwill's all embracing benevolence. Thoughts settled as well as open and aware, the mind is clarified. Acknowledge tranquility and peace. Content with life, all people, situations and experiences are equally embraced. Respectful, flexible, tolerant and considerate, follow as patience and acceptance extend towards others.

Equanimity naturally follows an insight experience as detached and released from self-absorbed ways.

Self is toxic—all about I, me and mine. Through the Immeasurables I open up to care, be engaged, know kindness and share goodwill.

October 14—Greed Eliminated as ‘Fruit’ Ripening to Wisdom*

“...it may be realized how suffering, when arising, arises: All of it has desire as its root, has desire as its cause—for desire is the cause of suffering.” SN 42, 11

Pecking and pecking like a chick breaking out of its shell, all your efforts over these many months count—the first as important as the last. Self-attachments and obsession have been slowly chipped away and weakened.

Craving’s cessation is about releasing the desire and greed associated with self-deception. Greed and desire compel craving, generating future actions and consequences. As a Non-Returner, discerned is the true nature of life and reality to do away with desire as well as hatred. Seeming to always be charged and in perpetual upset from sense-contacted impressions, Wisely Reflecting connects with the Noble Truths recognition for non-self as well as cessation.

Focused and discerning as a breath awareness, relaxing the body awareness follows. Through an intensified Wise Reflection, apply the Middle Way Path of blameless conduct-virtue, focused meditation-concentration, and discerning insight-wisdom is experienced. Note the ‘cooling’ down from sense-contacted impressions and the habitual runaround. Dormant, active and transgressing habits subdued, acknowledge how conceit and accompanying restlessness diminish.

Greed’s affects are stressful, painful and frenzied, leading to craving and compromising actions. Feel how desire is unsettling both physically and mentally. Gently allow the habitual buildup to empty and disperse. Note the Conditions Arising causes and effects dominating as compelling action. Follow the breath’s quality as a Wise Reflection, acknowledge the relief and clarifying concentration as greed weakens. Cultivating beneficial mental states, the Middle Way Wise Intention and Wise Effort are directed as renunciation and restraint. Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration then turn to craving’s cessation.

The Non-Returner insight ripens to end self-associated greed and desire in the Sense Realm. The Noble Truths are personally affirmed. Attraction for the body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification falls away. A Noble Truth recognition discerns self-illusion and the Conditions Arising purposeful action cycle.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

The Noble Truth liberating wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness as a Noble Truth recognition for self as desire; Investigation recognizes the Conditions Arising causes and effects related to desiring; Energy applies the Middle Way Wise Action along with Wise Effort eliminating desiring states; Rapture as a relieved renunciation and restraint is experienced; Tranquility is known as desire associated with the Sense Realm is released; Concentration focuses as the Noble Truth wisdom recognition is perceived; and Equanimity is the Middle Way Path fulfillment bringing an end to desire.

Controlled and insightful, there is only one rebirth before final Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. Stream Entry passage is followed to final release as an Accomplished One.

Desire is unending. I can never be satisfied. I turn away from worldly pursuits and follow the Middle Way Path.

October 15—Hatred Eliminated as ‘Fruit’ Ripening to Wisdom*

*“Having killed anger
 you sleep in ease.
 Having killed anger
 you do not grieve.
 The noble ones praise
 the slaying of anger
 — with its honeyed crest
 & poison root —
 for having killed it
 you do not grieve.” SN 1, 71*

Focused and discerning the breath’s awareness, relaxing the body the mind follows to settle down. Through an intensified Wise Reflection, the Middle Way Path of blameless conduct-virtue, focused meditation-concentration, and discerning insight-wisdom is applied. Note the ‘cooling’ down from sense-contacted impressions and the habitual runaround. Dormant, active and transgressing habits subdued, acknowledge how conceit and accompanying restlessness diminish.

Hatred’s affects are stifling and suffocating, leading to craving and compromising actions. Feel how hatred and aversion are unsettling, tension filled and dominated by aggression. Gently allow the habitual buildup to empty and disperse. Note the Conditions Arising causes and effects dominating as compelling actions. Following the breath’s quality as a Wise Reflection, acknowledge the relief and clarifying concentration as hatred weakens. Cultivating beneficial mental states, the Middle Way Wise Intention and Wise Effort are directed from aggression and hostility, cultivating beneficial mental states. Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration then turn to craving’s liberating cessation.

The Non-Returner insight ripens to end self-identified hatred and aversion in the Sense Realm. The Noble Truths are personally affirmed. Attraction for the body/mind associated Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification falls away. A Noble Truth recognition discerns self-illusion and the Conditions Arising purposeful action cycle.

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The Noble Truth liberating wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness turns to a Noble Truth recognition for self as hateful; Investigation recognizes the Conditions Arising causes and effects related to hatred; Energy applies the Middle Way Wise Action along with Wise Effort eliminating hatred; Rapture as a relieved renunciation and restraint is experienced; Tranquility is known as hatred associated within the Sense Realm is released; Concentration focuses as a Noble Truth wisdom recognition is perceived; and Equanimity is the Middle Way Path fulfillment bringing an end to hatred.

Controlled and insightful, there is only one rebirth before final Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. Stream Entry passage is followed to final release as an Accomplished One.

With hatred stopped I have a clear understanding and appreciation for life. I see how I raged and recoiled as a self actor. I couldn't have been more out-of-control.

October 16—Your Liberating Wisdom as an Accomplished One (Arhat)*

***“In one who
has gone the full distance,
is free from sorrow,
is fully released
in all respects,
has abandoned all bonds:
no fever is found.” DH 90***

An insightful and responsible journey, personal realization through Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation climaxes in liberation as noble, perfect and wise—an Accomplished One (Arhat, ‘worthy one’). Realized is the threefold Middle Way conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom to the ultimate breakthrough of Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance ending suffering. With misunderstanding clarified, Stream Entry passage is fulfilled. Through the Four Noble Truths knowing and release, self-deception is done away with to know the Ultimate Reality.

Insight-wisdom as an Accomplished One eliminates craving and rebirth for the Fine-Material Realm; eliminates craving and rebirth for the Immaterial Realm; eliminates disguised self-conceit; eliminates the restlessness tied to self-obsession; and, finally, eliminates the all pervasive self-deceived ignorance (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self). As an Accomplished One self-promoted thoughts, speech or actions aren’t engaged. Cut off entirely is craving (for desire, self-identity and as an escape) from generating future suffering consequences. The Conditions Arising cycle brought to an end, this present body/mind connection for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention) is the last manifestation. The Ultimate Reality is revealed.

Directed by the Four Noble Truths vision and insight, in a remarkable moment the Supreme Noble Truth, Nirvana is realized. Eradicated are all one-sided notions and actions stemming from self-delusion. The Enlightenment Aids penetrate to focus and discern the Unconditioned Realm. An amusement as disbelief emerges, realize how consumed, preoccupied and off track one was. An Accomplished One is dedicated to a steadfast wisdom: renunciation, seclusion, not engaging in

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wrongdoing or affliction, the end of craving, the end of attachments, and adhering to the Noble Truths insights. Whatever discomfort is experienced through the body, craving for the Five Groups is quenched, cooled down and the fire gone out. The Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle isn't engaged and craving as delight and pleasure is defunct. Careless and impulsive self-directed actions no longer arise.

The Sense, Fine-Material and Immaterial Realms thrive through a self-promoted ignorance. You have willed to be the person you are. Without a self-defined reference, the Noble Truths clarifying recognition stands out to discern the Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action cycle. Body as a body and not self, feelings as feelings and not self, mind as mind and not self, life-actions as life-actions and not self, penetrated is the selfless and conditioned nature of life and reality—the Unconditioned Realm stands out.

Follow as awareness expands to personal insight; from self-preoccupied to a non-self realization. Behind the impressions and feelings, behind the body/mind identification, the Unshakeable Fourth Noble Truth Deliverance reveals a non-self freedom and suffering's end. The Noble Truths clarifying insight dislodges the self-illusion. The hourglass-like of self-accumulated habits emptied, feel as underlying subconscious motives wane, craving stops and self-generation is halted. Suffering ends. The body, feelings, perception, mental reactions or conscious attention, the faux self-connection is identified.

Realize the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana. Unshakeable, certain, confident, sure and undeniable, deliverance from misunderstanding or ignorance is realized. Feel as the self-absorbed burden is released to finally move away from a body/mind obsession.

As an Accomplished One, the Noble Truths wisdom recognition is fathomed: self is suffering, craving as delight and pleasure leads to suffering; craving ceasing, suffering ends; and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to deliverance. Settled and released, equanimity stands out to discern the final fulfillment—freedom from self-delusion and suffering's end. No longer inclined or distracted by mundane worldly involvements, follow as a self-association ceases and liberation is realized—the Unconditioned Realm.

How could I have been so foolish? Self—what non-sense! I was duped. All my impulsiveness and craving finished, I realize the end of my self-manufactured suffering.

October 17—Fine-Material Realm Attachment*

“Quite withdrawn from sensual pleasures, withdrawn from unskillful mental qualities, the [person] enters and remains [in the Fine-Material Absorptions]... On that occasion he is one who is percipient of a refined truth [for the Fine-Material Absorptions]. And thus it is that with training one perception arises and with training another perception ceases.” DN 9

Although the Fine-Material Realm is highlighted by a deeper meditation absorption as physical connections and sense contacts are less dominating, nevertheless the realm is impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Misperceiving life and reality, the Fine-Material Realm follows the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle and is a self-absorbed out-of-touch exaggeration. Maturing as an Accomplished One, strengthened by the Middle Way Wise Effort, Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration, insight-wisdom as a Noble Truth recognition penetrates the Fine-Material Realm.

The Seclusion Absorption

Meditation provides ‘seclusion’ from sense-based distractions and disturbances related to over-the-top Sense Realm activities. Acknowledge the separation and detachment from self-indulged ways. Allowing sensual activities to fall away, Wisely Reflect to recognize the tranquility without sensory input. Feel the separation from the coarser Sense Realm preoccupation. Without the contributing factors, dormant, active and transgressing habits aren’t engaged. Experience the Seclusion Absorption revealing a subdued self-association as well as the cessation from compromising actions.

Insight Meditation is both instructive and revealing. There is joy in dropping the ties with the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification to discern the Conditions Arising causes and effects involved within the Fine-Material Realm. Feel the shift away from the body/mind identification to a Middle Way appreciation detached from self extremes. Open to the Fine-Material Seclusion Absorption Awareness.

While less dramatic and obvious, there persists a self-attached focus. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent. Recognize how the Seclusion Absorption is brought about, the purposeful action involved, and how one is instrumental in directing awareness.

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The Concentration Absorption

As an awareness removed from sensory engagement, the Fine-Material Concentration Absorption is experienced. Note as the discursive monologue, persisting habitual energies and compelling intentions decline and fall mute. Disengaged, feel how the impulse to act out and fulfill a self-ideal settles. Experience the present concentrated connection as the mind composes to separate from overt Sense Realm distractions.

While less dramatic and obvious, again there persists a self-attached focus. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent. Recognize how the Concentration Absorption is brought about, the purposeful action involved, and how one is instrumental in directing awareness.

The Equanimity Absorption

Equanimity is more than an undisturbed tranquility, but also an ease, confidence, fulfillment, and realization that comes about from renunciation and restraint for sensory interaction. Weakened is the self-directive. Follow the moment as centered and settled, equanimity is experienced as a tranquil awareness disengaged from Sense Realm arousal. Note how craving's compelling nature is calmed as a naturally refined equanimity. Not actively involved in craving, the Equanimity Absorption deepens.

While less dramatic and obvious, again there persists a self-attached focus. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent. Recognize how the Equanimity Absorption is brought about, the purposeful action involved, and how one is instrumental in directing awareness.

The Detachment Absorption

Equanimity gives way to the Detachment Absorption as a neither-pain-nor-pleasure experience disassociated from sensory onslaught and any overt self-reference. With all the drama and hyperactivity connected with the Sense Realm absent, realize the depths of this settled capacity and recognition. Unrestricted and not bound by sensory identification, a neither-pain-nor-pleasure tranquility is experienced. Recognize how conditions as a causes and effects purposeful action are generated and uphold a self-delusion.

Distinguish the underlying habitual intentions attraction and how a self-identity is clung to. Craving is subtler here in the Fine-Material Realm, but nevertheless just as damning and leads to suffering consequences. Acknowledge how craving is unwittingly nourished through self-directed motives. The subconscious revealed

(dormant, active and transgressing habit tendencies), the Fine-Material Realm is upheld by a less overt self-association. A neither-pain-nor-pleasure experience removed from sensory onslaught and self-association, note how awareness is marked as relief from exaggerated role playing and craved after instances. A detached awareness and intensified Wise Reflection stands out.

Without self-indulgence and reacting to pain or pleasure extremes, a dominating self image doesn't form. Feel the absence and relief as a weightless unburdening. One-Pointed Clarity as a Detachment Absorption is highlighted. Tranquility is experienced allowing for a penetrating mindfulness, undisturbed and not complicated by self-association. As a Fine-Material Detachment Absorption, absent is all the drama and hyperactivity connected with the Sense Realm.

While less dramatic and obvious, again there persists a level of self-attachment. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent. Wise Reflection as a Noble Truth clarifying insight turns away from self-reference.

Insight is more profound than imagination and self-expression as a deeply refined and settled awareness is experienced. Without exaggerated action involvements, the grosser self-identification drops. Note the relief, settling, well being and fulfillment experienced. Recognized are the conditions as causes and effects purposeful action upholding a self-delusion.

An intensified Wise Reflection, note how a degree of self-perception narrows and blurs reality even at this serene realm. Charged by motives, craving takes place (for desire, self-identity or as an escape) to once again fall into the same beguiling self-obsessed pitfall. Acknowledge the fondness and attraction for the Fine-Material Realm's seemingly secure and tranquil experiences. A self-ideal feels comfortable and pleasurable, but no matter how long endured conditioned reality is a sobering wake up call. Recognize the underlying habitual intentions and attracting to a clung to self-identity.

Discerning the conditioned nature, realize the causes and effects involved in the Fine-Material self-illusion. Acknowledge how suffering is unwittingly nourished through self-directed motives. A driven urgency, feel the actual friction and stress as craving leads to further manifestations. Sense the attraction and fondness for this Fine-Material Realm tranquility.

As an Accomplished One, the Four Noble Truths discernment is penetrated: the Fine-Material Realm is self-related and therefore dissatisfying and subject to suffering; craving as delight and pleasure carries over to suffering; craving's

cessation, the suffering cycle; and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to deliverance.

I fall victim to my desires and self-delusion. What seems attractive is ultimately self-tainted and not true. The Four Noble Truths clarify life—the Fine-Material Realm is self-consumed.

October 18—Fine-Material Realm Attachment Released as ‘Fruit’ Ripening to Wisdom*

“...abandoning [the Fine-Material Absorptions]...he considers this and understands it thus: ‘[These Fine-Material Absorptions are] conditioned and volitionally produced. But whatever is conditioned and volitionally produced is impermanent, subject to cessation.’ Standing upon that, he attains the destruction of the taints.” MN 52

Following the Middle Way Path of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, insight-wisdom now matures as an Accomplished One to penetrate the Noble Truths non-self insight and craving’s cessation from self-promoted actions.

A misperception of life and reality, realize the Conditions Arising cycle generating the Fine-Material Realm. A misguided self-perception leads to suffering. Detaching and releasing from self-associated causes and effects, feel how craving’s urgency (for desire, self-identity and as an escape) drops. The Noble Truth recognition opens to the Unconditioned Realm.

The final undoing of the Fine-Material Realm habit fetter is like dropping an unnecessary burden or weight. Note as one moves away from a self-related craving, attachment, commitment and becoming. While overtly less dramatic and challenging, nevertheless the psychology undermining the Fine-Material Realm is the same—self-identification leads to compromising actions. Acknowledge the habitual karmic urgency as motives compel craving. Caught up in the placid Fine-Material Realm illusion, charged motives perpetuate a self-fantasy. Acknowledge the ongoing subconscious pressures and intentions as well as the self-construed bliss discerning the inherent dissatisfaction within the Fine-Material Realm. Realizing the Four Noble Truths clarification and following the Middle Way Path, a selfless breakthrough is eminent.

Maturing as an Accomplished One consummate in conduct-virtue and meditation-concentration, insight-wisdom flourishes. A Noble Truths recognition and Middle Way experience, realized is suffering’s end. Noble, perfect and wise, it is impossible to be taken in, confused or attached to any self-perspective, habits or hindrances. Wisdom recognition penetrates the Fine-Material Realm self-delusion.

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The Noble Truths liberating wisdom-recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness as recognition for the self-association within the Fine-Material Realm; Investigation discerns the conditions and actions within and supporting the Fine-Material craving; Energy as the Middle Way Wise Effort develops beneficial mental states; Rapture emerges from renunciation and restraint separating from the Fine-Material Realm craving; Tranquility is a settling and repose from Fine-Material engagement; Concentration focuses as a Noble Truths recognition turns towards the Ultimate Reality; and Equanimity arises as a relief and release known from craving's cessation for the Fine-Material Realm.

Follow the Four Noble Truths Signless Deliverance for non-self; a Desireless Deliverance for craving's role; an Emptiness Deliverance realizing craving's cessation; and the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind penetrating self-misunderstanding to know the Ultimate Reality. The Unconditioned Realm is experienced.

Self is a deception. Letting my guard down, the self actor invades. I see how I crave and the painful repercussions. I long after self in any form or state.

October 19—Immaterial Realm Attachment*

“Now, when [a person] is percipient of himself here [in the Immaterial Realm], then from there to there, step by step, he touches the peak of perception. As he remains at the peak of perception, the thought occurs to him, ‘Thinking is bad for me. Not thinking is better for me. If I were to think and will, this perception of mine would cease, and a grosser perception would appear. What if I were neither to think nor to will?’ So he neither thinks nor wills, and as he is neither thinking nor willing, that perception ceases and another, grosser perception does not appear. He touches cessation. This is how there is the alert step-by step attainment of the ultimate cessation of perception.” DN 9

Highlighted by long enduring psychic bliss (there is no material body or physical form here), the Immaterial Realm is nevertheless impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. While suffering is less obvious, friction nevertheless in the form of a subtle self-directed notion persists. Misunderstanding life and reality, the Immaterial Material Realm follows the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle attached to a self-willed obsession. Maturing as an Accomplished One, supported by the Middle Way Wise Effort, Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration, insight-wisdom as a Noble Truth recognition penetrates the Immaterial Realm.

Fathom the subconscious potentials and how deep rooted conceit and accompanying restlessness form as a karmic upheaval. The Immaterial Absorption of Infinite Space, Infinite Consciousness, Nothingness or Emptiness, and Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception are experienced.

Infinite Space

Removed entirely from material and physical distractions, the Immaterial Awareness is a concentrated realization not only for how conscious actions form but the underlying driven self-delusion involved.

Focused and discerning, follow how a subtle consciousness flares as a background intention. As an Immaterial Awareness for Infinite Space one pulls back from the overt gravity of the self actor to acknowledge how self-conceit forms as a mental impression. Settling to move through these impressions, realize the mental energies as karmic impressions flashing. Note how craving instances link conscious actions

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as desire, self-identity or as an escape. At the center of conscious actions is self-identification. What is left is the self-conceit around which all other actions revolve, gravitate towards and form keeping one restless. Gently allow the mental experiences to release and fade through the Infinite Space Absorption. As a Middle Way appreciation and equanimity from self extremes, don't indulge in or have hostility but allow the impression to pass. Conscious attention is minute when compared to the vastness of Infinite Space. As a discerning Wise Reflection revealing the Immaterial Absorption, feel the shift away from self-attached deception.

Hovering in the space of Immaterial Absorption, follow how craving instances arise linking conscious actions through desire, self-identity and as an escape. Experience dormant, active and transgressing habitual potentials without acting on them. Allow the experience to disperse into Infinite Space. Acknowledge how consciousness thrives or not. While less dramatic and obvious, there persists a degree of self-attached focus. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent. Recognized is how the Infinite Space Absorption is brought about, the purposeful action involved, and how one is instrumental in directing awareness.

Infinite Consciousness

Consciousness is nothing more than a pin-point instance as attention narrows around a beguiling thought impression.

Focused and discerning as an Immaterial Awareness, the space of pure psychic-willed energy is passed. With nothing forming, freed from dormant greed and hatred, thought impressions dissolve and pass. Note the wispy action intent without reacting to it or giving way to an actual transgressing consequence. Follow the Immaterial Awareness to the Infinite Consciousness Absorption.

Consciousness then arising from causes and effects and defined by purposeful action, one succumbs to a self-impression. Habits, conceit and accompanying restlessness are nothing more than pin-point action experienced instances. The mind narrows and collapses around the beguiling impression. Suffering as stress, sorrow, lamentation, grief and despair follows. Wisely Reflecting, discern the Conditions Arising cycle. A non-self insight stands out.

With self-delusion at the center like a giant sun and the other self-associated conditions as planets and moons orbiting around the self-delusion, a self-defined karmic orbit is engaged and followed. Settled and centered as an Immaterial Awareness, follow the wispy action intention without reacting to it. Infinite Consciousness expands.

Feel the release not gravitating towards craved after and attached potentials. A self-consciousness doesn't form and suffering isn't experienced. An unobstructed Infinite Consciousness passes. Though not entirely eradicated, craving is subdued. Only when one falls back into a self-centered orbit does the experience narrow and collapse again to a self-suffering gravity. Closer to a black hole, self draws everything around it to being a self-experience. Following a Middle Way appreciation and equanimity, a self-directed compromising gravity isn't actively engaged.

Acknowledge how self-identification shrinks through the Infinite Consciousness Absorption. Note the relief and release from self-obsession. Wise Reflection as insight is more profound than habit potentials. Without the contributing factors, dormant, active and transgressing habits are temporarily defused. Note how self-vexed craving has waned.

While less dramatic and obvious, again there persists a self-attached focus. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent. Recognized is how the Infinite Consciousness Absorption is brought about, the purposeful action involved, and how one is instrumental in directing awareness.

Nothingness or Emptiness

The Immaterial Absorption Awareness for 'nothingness' or 'emptiness' is experienced as a self-reference dissipates. In 'nothingness' feel as there is no overt compelling self-identification. The self-illusion to crave for, cling to, uphold or pursue—there is 'nothing' or an 'emptiness' after affect. Thought impressions twinkle like far off suns as one passes through a gravity-less 'empty' atmosphere. Acknowledge how self-identification shrinks to 'nothingness.' However, don't take pleasure, find satisfaction, or indulge in 'emptiness' as a self-satisfaction.

'Nothingness' or 'emptiness' isn't chaos but a realization into the true nature of life and reality without self-identification or compromising actions. Experience and know 'nothingness' as open, vast, released and without self-reference. Acknowledge the relief separating from a self-burdened orbit. Craving as desire, as self-identity or as an escape isn't engaged. Acknowledge the weightlessness and unbinding. There is only a present distinguishing awareness.

While less dramatic and obvious, again there persists a self-attached focus. As the meditative moment changes, weakens or ends, a self-related stress and dissatisfaction becomes apparent. Recognized is how the 'nothingness' or 'emptiness' absorption is brought about, the purposeful action involved, and how one is instrumental in directing awareness.

Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception

The Immaterial Awareness as a Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception Absorption a diminished self-identification doesn't arise as divisive or judgmental. The mind doesn't narrow to a self-consciousness but as a Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception awareness. With no self-focus to gravitate towards, the Immaterial Absorption expands.

An intensified Wise Reflection, a Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception concentration experiences perception without any self-distorted warping. Note as the mind doesn't narrow to a self-reference, but through a Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception Immaterial Absorption a self-release is experienced. Without self-limitations, a Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception Immaterial Awareness is experienced. Self-perception is a mistake because there is only action as a Conditions Arising causes and effects. Action begets action and the short-lived impermanence is jarring. The true nature of life and reality as underscored by purposeful action, a self-conscious perception doesn't form. Wisely discern what it is to be without self-incurred assumptions and actions. Acknowledge how self-derived craving doesn't escalate. Feel the relief and release from self-domination.

Note how the Immaterial Realm's comfort and less overt stress (a degree of self-perception narrows even in this placid realm) can be a seduction. Charged by self-directed motives, craving becomes attachment, leading to a suffering fallout. Once again one is victimized by a beguiling self-illusion. Self-identity feels secure, but no matter how long endured conditioned reality is undermining. Recognize the underlying intentions and how a self-identity is clung to.

Discerning the conditioned nature, realize the causes and effects related to the Immaterial self-illusion. Acknowledge how suffering as subtly self-directed motives are unwittingly nourished. Feel the friction and stress as craving generates and leads to future manifestations and consequences. Sense the attraction and the allure within the refined Immaterial Realm. Subconscious psychic intentions revealed, the Immaterial Realm is upheld by a self-deception and corresponding conditions.

As an Accomplished One, penetrated is the Four Noble Truths discernment: the Immaterial Realm is self-related and therefore dissatisfying and subject to suffering; craving as delight and pleasure carries over to compromising consequences; craving ceasing, suffering ends; and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to deliverance.

There is great bliss in the Immaterial Realm, but disguised in the background is a self-deception. I realize the Four Noble Truths wisdom clarifying life. The Immaterial Realm is also a self-trap.

October 20—Immaterial Realm Attachment Released as ‘Fruit’ Ripening to Wisdom*

“Then again, a [person]—with the complete transcending of perceptions of [physical] form, with the disappearance of perceptions of resistance, and not heeding perceptions of diversity, [perceiving,] ‘Infinite space’—enters and remains in the dimension of the infinitude of space. He reflects on this and discerns, ‘This attainment of the infinitude of space is fabricated and intended. Now whatever is fabricated & intended is inconstant and subject to cessation.’ Staying right there, he reaches the ending of the mental fermentations.” MN 52

Following the Middle Way Path of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, insight-wisdom matures as an Accomplished One to penetrate the Noble Truths clarifying insight and craving’s cessation from self-promoted actions.

A misperception of life and reality, realize the Immaterial Realm Conditions Arising cycle. A misguided self-deception leads to suffering. Detaching and releasing from self-associated causes and effects, feel how craving’s urgency drops (for desire, self-identity and as an escape). The Noble Truth recognition reveals the Unconditioned Realm.

The Immaterial Realm self-associated burden is released. Note as one moves away from a self-dominating friction for and engaged in keeping a self-directive going. While overtly less dramatic and challenging, nevertheless the psychology undermining the Immaterial Realm is same—self-identification gives way to compromising actions. Feel how the habitual role of karmic intentions compels craving. Caught up in the placid Immaterial Realm illusion, charged motives perpetuate a self-fantasy. Recognizing the inherent dissatisfaction within the Immaterial Realm, acknowledge the ongoing subconscious pressures and forming intentions as well as the self-construed bliss. Realizing the Four Noble Truths clarification and following the Middle Way Path guidance, a selfless breakthrough is eminent.

Maturing as an Accomplished One consummate in conduct-virtue and meditation-concentration, insight-wisdom flourishes. A recognition of the Four Noble Truths and Middle Way experience, realized is suffering’s end. Noble, perfect and wise, it is

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impossible to be taken in, confused or attached to any self-view, habits or hindrances. Wisdom recognition penetrates the Immaterial Realm self-delusion.

The Noble Truths liberating wisdom-recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness as recognition for the self-association within the Immaterial Realm; Investigation discerns the conditions and actions within and supporting the Immaterial craving; Energy as the Middle Way Wise Effort develops beneficial mental states; Rapture emerges from renunciation and restraint separating from the Immaterial Realm craving; Tranquility is a settling and repose from Immaterial engagement; Concentration focuses as a Noble Truths recognition turns towards the Ultimate Reality; and Equanimity arises as relief and release known from craving's cessation for the Immaterial Realm.

Follow the Four Noble Truths recognition Signless Deliverance for non-self; a Desireless Deliverance for craving's role; an Emptiness Deliverance realizing craving's cessation; and the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind penetrating self-misunderstanding to know the Ultimate Reality. The Unconditioned Realm is experienced.

As a Noble Truth wisdom recognition, I penetrate the cessation for self-inspired actions.

October 21—The Conceit Habit Fetter*

“Soiled by contempt (for others), destroyed by conceit, people fall into hell.”
THAG 21

Like a nerve ending twitching and throbbing, conceit remains as a subtle self-persisting reference and attachment. Conceit here isn't the overt conceit of ego and pride, but rather is refined and centered around a self-obsessed delusion for a unique and separate self. The looming confusion remains (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self). The preoccupation, the unsettling, the fondness, the worry, the looking over the shoulder, the needing, the compelling habitual action, all swirl around and are generated by a self-associated conceit. As long as conceit remains, one mistakes the impermanent as permanent, takes what is suffering to be satisfying, and mistakes the non-self for self. Deep-seated self-attachments keep one from knowing suffering's end and the Ultimate Reality. 'I think therefore I am' is the ultimate conceited-delusion as consciousness actually forms around causes and effects conditioned actions and not a real self. Maturing as an Accomplished One, strengthened by the Middle Way Wise Effort, Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration, insight-wisdom as a Noble Truth recognition penetrates conceit.

Following the breath's quality, note how conceit forms from a misunderstanding of life and reality. Acknowledge the stress and inflation as conceit goes on to occupy space and creates an illusion of time (rather than action related) through a self-centered focus. Craving after as delight and pleasure arises and carries over to compromising actions. Note how the many conditions, pressures, influences and elements join to charge conceit. The breath quality reflects the subtle strain and self-burden. The purposeful action of Conditions Arising causes and effects goes on to dominate. Feel how self-identification and pursued craving preoccupies (for desire, self-identity and as an escape). Much like a bell reverberates and hums softly after it is rung, so too does conceit remain as a restless after shock tied to a self-fantasy.

No longer sentimental or attached as a self actor, suffering's end is eminent. Disengaged from self-driven motives, note the shift in the breath's quality as a sighed relief. Follow how the breath changes to a settled and slower respiration from deeper down in the lower diaphragm and abdomen. Conceit shrinks and

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abates. Cessation from craving draws to a close. Acknowledge as the Conditions Arising causes and effects urgency falls away.

At the brink of final Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance, the Noble Truths recognition intensifies to end self-suffering and know final release. As conceit recedes, note how the mind doesn't incline to judge, define or act impulsively. The Conditions Arising cycle halted, a non-self recognition and craving's cessation from self-promoted actions is experienced. The emperor without clothes exposed, feel how self-conceit goes on to disperse. Without the accompany conditions, self-conceit withers like a dry twig. Detaching from the causes and effects cycle, feel how the burden and self-gravity releases.

As an Accomplished One, penetrated is the Four Noble Truths discernment: conceit as self-suffering fostered by misunderstanding life and reality; craving continues the conceited illusion; craving's cessation, conceit ends; and Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to deliverance. Follow the direct insight into the endless mind games self-deception conjures up. Dispassion is known (a not having 'passion' or fondness for self on any level).

The Middle Way Path of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom unite as a liberating recognition experience.

I settle to realize the Ultimate Reality—without self-identification or promotion. Craving has fallen away.

October 22—Conceit Released as ‘Fruit’ Ripening to Wisdom*

“Having completely abandoned conceit, be an ender (of suffering) through knowledge and become one who dwells at peace.” THAG 21

Following the Middle Way Path of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, insight-wisdom as an Accomplished One penetrates the Noble Truths non-self insight and craving’s cessation from self-promoted actions.

Not affected by or following self extremes, the Middle Way Path directs one to suffering’s end. Conceit springs up and flashes under the right conditions craving for desire, self-identity and as an escape. With the overt habits of greed and hatred eradicated, a remaining conceit is tied to misunderstanding life. Now all that one has been through as an Insight Meditation experience joins as a Noble Truth Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

Revealed is the conceit habit fetter carrying over as residue a self-preoccupied obsession. A karmic pulsing habitual tendency, feel this remaining after affect from countless life-times of craved after domination. As craving ceases, conceit also falls away and the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle is halted. Wise Reflection intensifies as a Noble Truth clarification of life and reality.

With the gross obstacles of greed and hatred eliminated, the subconscious is penetrated to follow how conceit churns and how recurring self-willed intentions arise. Thought impressions flash as the remaining self-residue pulses, but Wise Reflection directs one through the subtle agitation. Follow how conceit’s dizzying affect slows down. Not over taken by self extremes, the Middle Way Path as Wise Effort, Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration is followed. Conceit doesn’t form into a self-fantasy. Wise Reflection penetrates the self-illusion.

Maturing as an Accomplished One consummate in conduct-virtue and meditation-concentration, insight-wisdom flourishes. A recognition of the Four Noble Truths and Middle Way experience, suffering’s end is realized. Noble, perfect and wise, it is impossible to be taken in, confused or attached to any self-view, habits or hindrances. Wisdom recognition penetrates the conceit self-delusion.

The Noble Truths liberating wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness recognizes the narrowing self-

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obsessed focus; Investigation penetrates the conditions and actions involved in self-deceived suffering; Effort arises as Wise Concentration for the Noble Truth Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind; Rapture as worldly associations blurring reality are dropped; Tranquility as the Noble Truth clarification is affirmed; Concentration as the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is fulfilled as liberating wisdom; and Equanimity as relief and release for suffering's cessation.

Follow the Four Noble Truths recognition Signless Deliverance for non-self; a Desireless Deliverance for craving's role; an Emptiness Deliverance realizing craving's cessation; and the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind penetrating self-misunderstanding to know the Ultimate Reality. The Unconditioned Realm is experienced.

Conceit falling away, I open to the Noble Truth recognition. My suffering as a self actor is coming to an end.

October 23—The Restlessness Habit-Fetter*

“Is there any obsession unabandoned in myself that might so obsess my mind that I cannot know or see things as they actually are [lust, ill will, laziness, remorse, doubt]?” MN 48

As a distracted residue, restlessness is the unsettling that persists in any mind not yet freed nor fully penetrating the Four Noble Truths Wisdom-Liberating experience. Though changed, intuitive and insightful, one has yet to be entirely released from self-deception. The unsettling affects one as restlessness. A subtle apprehension from not being released clouds the mind. While overt habits are eradicated, the after affects reverberate as a low-key stress reflecting a self-persisting agitation. The nagging restlessness is tied to the after affects of self-conceited upheaval. The self actor seeks to be occupied, engaged and persist. Maturing as an Accomplished One, strengthened by the Middle Way Wise Effort, Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration, insight-wisdom as a Noble Truth recognition penetrates restlessness. The breath's quality reflects a restlessly formed pressure derived from the deeper misunderstanding of life and reality. Note how an unsettling impulse persists and thrives. Acknowledge the many conditions, pressures, influences and elements for a body/mind identification. As purposeful action, Conditions Arising causes and effects weigh heavily. Feel how a self-identified focus preoccupies and leads to compromising consequences.

Directed by the Middle Way insight-wisdom (Wise Effort, Wise Awareness, Wise Concentration), one isn't sentimental or attached to the self actor role. This is to be the last manifestation as suffering's end is eminent. Disengaged from self-delusion, acknowledge the shift in the breath as a sighed relief. Follow how the breath changes to a settled and refined respiration from down at the lower abdomen and diaphragm. As restlessness recedes one doesn't incline to judge, define or act impulsively. Follow how equanimity is settling and allows for a clarifying wisdom. Restlessness drawing to a close, acknowledge as the Conditions Arising urgency drops away.

At the brink of final Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance, the Noble Truth recognition intensifies to see self-suffering's potential end and final release. As restlessness recedes, note how the mind doesn't incline to judge, define or act impulsively. The Conditions Arising cycle halted, a non-self recognition and craving's cessation from

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self-promoted actions is experienced. Without the accompany conditions, restlessness settles and a clarifying wisdom emerges.

An Accomplished One, penetrated is the Four Noble Truths discernment: restlessness as self-suffering formed from misunderstanding life and reality; craving continues the restless illusion; craving ceasing, restlessness ends; and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to deliverance. Follow the direct insight into the endless mind games self-deception conjures up. Dispassion is known (a not having 'passion' or fondness for self on any level).

The Middle Way Path of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom unite as a liberating recognition experience.

The self actor charade doesn't overwhelm me. I'm not taken in by impulsive habits and careless behavior.

October 24—Restlessness Released as ‘Fruit’ ripening to Wisdom*

“Possessing this aggregate of noble virtue, and this noble restraint of the faculties, and possessing this noble mindfulness and full awareness, he resorts to a secluded resting place...Abandoning restlessness..., he purifies his mind from restlessness...” MN 27

Following the Middle Way Path of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, the insight-wisdom of Accomplished One penetrates the Noble Truths clarifying insight and craving’s cessation from self-promoted actions.

Not dominated by the Sense, Fine-Material, or Immaterial Realm conditioned causes and effects, restlessness is the after shock related to a self-illusion. Acknowledge the subtle tensions and apprehension brought about from confusion. With the gross obstacles of greed and hatred eliminated, the subconscious is revealed and how restlessness churns and self-willed intentions arise. Thought impressions flash as the remaining self-residue pulses, but Wise Reflection discerns the subtle agitation.

Follow how restlessness’ dizzying affect slows down. Revealed is the restlessness habit fetter carrying over as residue from self-preoccupied involvements. A karmic pulsing habitual tendency, feel this remaining restless after effect from countless life-times of craved for domination. A residue from self-preoccupied careless ways and impulsive actions, feel the restlessness left in conceit’s wake.

Self casts a long shadow, but the Noble Truths clarification along with the Middle Way Path, realizes suffering’s end. As craving ceases, restlessness also recedes and the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle stops. Wise Reflection intensifies and the Noble Truth wisdom-recognition clarifies life and reality. Not following self extremes, the Middle Way Path directs one as Wise Effort, Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration. Restlessness doesn’t form into a self-fantasy. Wise Reflection penetrates the self-illusion. Restlessness dropped, wisdom expands as self-inclined motives and self-promoted actions are released to know the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm. Feel as self-association disperses and falls away. Acknowledge the relief as equanimity emerges.

Maturing as an Accomplished One consummate in conduct-virtue and meditation-concentration, insight-wisdom flourishes. A recognition of the Four Noble Truths and Middle Way experience, suffering’s end is realized. Noble, perfect and wise, it is

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impossible to be taken in, confused or attached to any self-view, habits or hindrances. Wisdom recognition penetrates the restlessness self-delusion.

The Noble Truths liberating wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness recognizes the restlessness of one not yet entirely liberated from self-connected agitation; Investigation penetrates the conditions and actions associated with restlessness; Effort arises as Wise Concentration; Rapture is experienced as worldly associations blurring reality are dropped; Tranquility as the Noble Truth clarification is affirmed; Concentration as the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is fulfilled as liberating wisdom; and Equanimity as relief and release from suffering's cessation.

Follow the Four Noble Truths recognition Signless Deliverance for non-self; a Desireless Deliverance for craving's role; an Emptiness Deliverance realizing craving's cessation; and the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind penetrating self-misunderstanding to know the Ultimate Reality.

With restlessness quelled, I settle to penetrate the Noble Truth vision and liberation.

October 25—The Threefold-Misperception Fetter (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self)*

“There are three taints: the taint of sensual desire, the taint of being and the taint of ignorance. With the arising of ignorance there is the arising of the taints. With the cessation of ignorance there is the cessation of the taints.” MN 9

The Sense Realm is obsessed with a body/mind identification; the Fine-Material Realm detaches to a refined tranquility but continues as a mistaken self-identification; and in the Immaterial Realm psychic energy or mental formations as self stand out. In each manifestation the causes and effects as self-identification and suffering are misunderstood. Self-confusion or ignorance remains on three levels to be eradicated—the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self. Maturing as an Accomplished One, strengthened by the Middle Way Wise Effort, Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration, insight-wisdom as a Noble Truth recognition eradicates ignorance.

The Drive for Desire

***“The greed with which
beings go to a bad destination,
coveting:
from rightly discerning that greed,
those who see clearly
let go.
Letting go,
they never come to this world
again.” IT 1***

Needing, wanting, seeking to fulfill or gain, self is a non-stop desire for more, different, plenty and security. Never satisfied or at rest, one is forever in pursuit to fulfill self-indulged expectations and a self-ambition. Worldly pursuits (gain/loss, fame/dishonor, praise/blame, happiness/pain) are a down fall. Nothing could be less rewarding and fulfilling. Self-inspired actions unwittingly follow, lead to craving and give way to suffering consequences. Through a deepened awareness, recognition and insight, discern the self-identification within all three conditioned realms.

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Note how an off base, strong-willed fantasy and imagination are self-absorbed and restless. Acknowledge how a plotting subconscious dialogue dominates. The thought before the thought or action, karmic urgency provokes and compels one on. In turn thoughts, speech and actions are affected by a desiring, impossible to fulfill self-expression. Note how this initial karma or motive escalates to craving (for desire, self-identity, or as an escape) and goes on to generate compromising consequences. Self-promoted actions give way to a continuous self-evolution.

Focused and discerning, follow the breath's quality, reflecting desire as a self actor. Sense the strain over facial muscles, around the eyes, clenched jaw along with abdominal and pelvic pressure. Thought impressions narrow as the subconscious plots to fulfill a self-ideal. Now the whole of the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path joining as an intensified Wise Reflection penetrates the Four Noble Truths Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance.

Releasing the self actor, feel the relief as the Noble Truth recognition stands out and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is fulfilled: Wise Understanding discerning and clarifying reality; Wise Intention as pure minded; Wise Speech as beneficial; Wise Action as responsibly engaged; Wise Livelihood as directed to fulfillment; Wise Effort transforms intentions and the mind; Wise Awareness is directed to wisdom; Wise Concentration penetrates final Wisdom-Deliverance. With worldly distractions dropped habit fetters are released, cessation from self-generated actions and the conditioned plagued causes and effects cycle is known. The profound equanimity and liberation of an Accomplished One is experienced.

Follow the Noble Truths recognition Signless Deliverance for a self-notion; a Desireless Deliverance from craving after; an Emptiness Deliverance knowing craving's cessation; then to the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind as wisdom clarification opening to the Unconditioned Realm as cessation from self-reference and suffering ends.

With conceit and restlessness cut off, I turn towards the Ultimate Reality.

October 26—The Drive for Existence*

***“With craving his companion, a man
wanders on a long, long time.
Neither in this state here
nor anywhere else
does he go beyond
the wandering-on.” IT 15***

While self is a misunderstanding of life, self-centered actions seek out to gratify and try to uphold a self-related existence. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are like foam (body), bubbles (feelings), a mirage (perception), a plantain tree (mental reactions) and a magic show (conscious attention). What persists isn't a separate or unique self, but purposeful action as Conditions Arising causes and effects (multiple actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self). Literally willed and craving after as delight and pleasure, a self-identity takes one in.

The self actor seeks comfort, stability, well-being and security. This is part of the self-survival game. Follow how suffering follows. In the Sense Realm a body/mind identification stands out, in the Fine-Material Realm a refined and controlled existence is experienced, and in the Immaterial Realm long periods of undisturbed psychic bliss are enjoyed. In each case a misconstrued, self-deception blurs reality. Through an intuitive awareness and intensified Wise Reflection, realize the self-identification within all three conditioned realms and craving's role.

Focused and discerning, follow the breath's quality. With each breath is a charged energy for existence and survival. Acknowledge the heavier breaths, drawn facial muscles, clenched jaw, chest compression along with abdominal and pelvic strain. Note how the mind is taxed and understanding compromised. Like a mouse on a spinning wheel, self-antics are exhausting.

The breath reflects a mistaken self-identity and craved after existence (rather there is only purposeful action as experienced through conditions, pressures, influences and elements). Thought impressions narrow as a self actor warps life and reality. Now the whole of the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path joins as an intensified Wise Reflection penetrating the Four Noble Truths liberation from self-delusion.

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Releasing the self actor, feel the relief as the Noble Truth recognition stands out and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is fulfilled: Wise Understanding discerning and clarifying reality; Wise Intention as pure minded; Wise Speech as beneficial; Wise Action as responsibly engaged; Wise Livelihood as directed to fulfillment; Wise Effort transforms intentions and the mind; Wise Awareness is directed to wisdom; and Wise Concentration penetrates final Wisdom-Deliverance. With worldly distractions dropped habit fetters are released, cessation from self-generated actions and the conditioned plagued causes and effects cycle is known. The profound equanimity and liberation as an Accomplished One is experienced.

Follow the Noble Truths recognition Signless Deliverance for self-notion; a Desireless Deliverance from craving after; an Emptiness Deliverance knowing craving's cessation; then to the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind as wisdom clarification opening to the Unconditioned Realm as cessation from self-reference and suffering ends.

There's no fulfilling self. I end up dissatisfied. Self is an illusion.

October 27—Driven by Misunderstanding Life as Self*

“And what is ignorance, what is the origin of ignorance, what is the cessation of ignorance, what is the way leading to the cessation of ignorance? Not knowing about suffering, not knowing about the origin of suffering, not knowing about the cessation of suffering, not knowing about the way leading to the cessation of suffering—this is called ignorance. With the arising of the taints there is the arising of ignorance; with the cessation of the taints there is the cessation of ignorance. The way leading to the cessation of ignorance is just this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, Wise Understanding through to Wise Concentration.” MN 9

At the center of suffering is misunderstanding (or ignorance). In turn misunderstanding has its own conditions as events and actions are mistaken as separate, unique and self. Self-delusion is like a black cloud always hanging over one’s head ready to thunder and storm under the right conditions. There is no escaping the torment as misunderstanding life keeps one on course to suffering. The Four Noble Truths distinguishing insight and Middle Way Path are the only deliverance.

Acknowledge the profound burden misunderstanding holds. Mistaking the drive for desire and existence follows. Over the course of these many months the self-blinders obscuring reality have ever so slowly been pulled away. Through a deepening awareness, recognition and wisdom, one sees the one-sided misplaced identification within all three conditioned realms is revealed. The Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle becomes clear: from misunderstanding or ignorance comes self-directed thought formations, a present consciousness for self arises as a body/mind identity takes place, sense contacts thrive, sense impressions are experienced, feelings experienced, craving arises, attachment follows, a commitment to act forms, and actions are engaged leading to suffering consequences.

Focused and discerning, follow the breath’s quality. Heavy, pressured and intense, self-misunderstanding is a burden; physically self takes its toll through illness and the accompanying mental instability. Misunderstanding falls into self role playing. Now the whole of the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path joins as an intensified Wise

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Reflection to penetrate the Noble Truth wisdom recognition and Middle Way Path as deliverance.

Releasing the self actor, feel the relief as the Noble Truth recognition stands out and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is fulfilled: Wise Understanding discerning and clarifying reality; Wise Intention as pure minded; Wise Speech as beneficial; Wise Action as responsibly engaged; Wise Livelihood as directed to fulfillment; Wise Effort transforms intentions and the mind; Wise Awareness is directed to wisdom; Wise Concentration penetrates final Wisdom-Deliverance. With worldly distractions dropped habit fetters are released, cessation from self-generated actions and the conditioned plagued causes and effects cycle is known. The profound equanimity and liberation of an Accomplished One is experienced.

Follow the Noble Truths recognition Signless Deliverance for self-notion; a Desireless Deliverance for craving after; an Emptiness Deliverance knowing craving's cessation; then to the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind as wisdom clarification opening to the Unconditioned Realm as cessation from self-reference and suffering ends.

Penetrating and released from self, I'm all the wiser. No longer is there confusion.

October 28—Misunderstanding Released as ‘Fruit’ Ripening to Wisdom*

“The way leading to the cessation of the taints is just this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, Wise Understanding, Wise Intention, Wise Speech, Wise Action, Wise Livelihood, Wise Effort, Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration.” MN 9

Following the Middle Way Path of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, insight-wisdom as an Accomplished One penetrates the Noble Truths clarifying insight and craving’s cessation from self-promoted actions.

As a personal awareness and wisdom recognition, self-delusion is released and a non-self-recognition known. This present body/mind manifestation is the left over residue of willed actions. The Noble Truths vision and insight and following the Middle Way Path, being a self-victim ends.

Desire is an absorbing fantasy. Acknowledge how the self-notion manifests itself through craving as delight and pleasure. But like a sand castle, everything is eventually washed away. Now as an intensified Wise Reflection, follow the Noble Truths recognition for non-self as well as for the Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action.

Connected with a run amuck imagination, desire is a warped view of existence. Missed has been the Conditions Arising causes and effects as purposeful actions (the many actions giving the illusion of ‘one’). Focused and discerning, Wise Reflection penetrates the true nature of life and reality. Recognize how actions seek to uphold an all consuming charged self-existence and lead to suffering consequences. The Noble Truth wisdom recognition now discerns the self-illusion. Note how craving’s urgency falls away and ceases.

Seeing impermanence, realizing dissatisfaction as well as the non-self insight, self role playing is dropped. Sense the relief, release and abiding equanimity from self-domination. Delusion gives way to a clarifying wisdom and liberation. The Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm revealed, Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends.

Feel as self-obsession wavers and misperception falls away. The Noble Truths insight to craving’s cessation is experienced. Acknowledge the relief and release known with desire ending. Stopped is the transferring over as rebirth of habitual

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actions and ongoing suffering. The Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage is fulfilled. The grand illusion lifted, craving's urgency done away with, note how self-perception clears and misunderstanding is clarified. Self is never again to be taken up or promoted.

Matured as an Accomplished One consummate in conduct-virtue and meditation-concentration, insight-wisdom flourishes. A recognition of the Four Noble Truths and Middle Way experience, suffering's end is realized. Noble, perfect and wise, it is impossible to be taken in, confused or attached by a self-view, habits or hindrances. Wisdom recognition penetrates misunderstanding leading to self-deluded suffering.

The Noble Truths liberating wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness as settled and clarifying penetrates the Ultimate Reality; Investigation discerns the conditions and beguiling actions as a body/mind self-identification and is now brought to cessation; Effort does away with all self-associated confusion as cessation; Rapture as the self-blindness have been released is experienced and liberating wisdom known; Tranquility as abiding in the fulfillment as liberation; Concentration as the Four Noble Truths clarification realizes the Ultimate Reality; and Equanimity from having penetrated Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

Follow the Four Noble Truths recognition Signless Deliverance for non-self; a Desireless Deliverance for craving's role; an Emptiness Deliverance realizing craving's cessation; and the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind as wisdom clarification as misunderstanding falls away and the Ultimate Reality is known.

As an Accomplished One, self-delusion is penetrated and overcome—you are released.

The experience is profound. I brought myself to suffering and I've freed myself from suffering—from my self-delusion. What a joy to be done with and let go of the self actor!

October 29—Stream Entry to Liberation*

“There are these six rewards in realizing the fruit of stream-entry...One is certain of the true [knowledge]. One is not subject to falling back. There is no suffering over what has had a limit placed on it. One is endowed with uncommon knowledge. One rightly sees cause, along with causally-originated phenomena.” AN 6, 97

The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path follows Stream Entry passage and on to final deliverance. Blameless in conduct-virtue, discerning in meditation-concentration, and penetrating as insight-wisdom, the Middle Way unites as a pinnacle of personal experience—an Accomplished One. Penetrated firsthand is the Wisdom-Liberating breakthrough.

As a Stream Enterer one is consummate in conduct-virtue, self-identity view is rightly realized as so many conditioned purposeful actions; there is faith, confidence and trust in the Noble Truth vision and insight as well as the Middle Way Path followed to liberation; and reliance on rites, rituals and ceremonies are realized as limiting and falling short. This isn't an intellectual endeavor, but a genuine transformation and breakthrough separating from self-obsession.

Controlled in conduct-virtue as a Once Returner, greed and hatred are weakened along with the Sense Realm's baser instincts.

A Non-Returner is consummate in meditation-concentration and does away with greed and hatred as a self actor.

An Accomplished One has distinguishing insight-wisdom to break with the self-delusion for the Fine-Material and Immaterial Realms, eradicates conceit and restlessness along with the underlying shackling self-deception. The Noble Truth realization pierces through self-delusion to realize the Unconditioned Realm. Like stepping through a mirror, the self-deceived reflection is no more.

As a self actor everything revolved around a body/mind association for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification, but this was a naïve, erroneous and misguided view of life. Insight Meditation emphasizing personal awareness as Wise

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Reflection, the Noble Truths recognition and following the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path end suffering.

Self-association done away with, dormant, active and the transgressing subconscious habitual urgency don't arise. Craving as desire, for a self-identity and to escape lead to suffering consequences is defunct. The Conditions Arising cycle as ended. Penetrating the Four Noble Truths and following the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path, one inclines to the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm.

As a Wise Reflection for the breath's quality and mental states, settle to be patient and control Monkey Mind distractions. The Five Wise Actions recognize karmic repercussions and undermining habitual affects. Realized are the Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action cycle. The Noble Truths wisdom realization discerns life and reality as non-self and craving's role in generating future manifestations. The Middle Way Path as Stream Entry passage, the final liberation as an Accomplished One comes to fruition. The Ultimate Reality and Unconditioned Realm realized, Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

A clarified recognition penetrated, self-delusion is no more. Requiring dedicated effort, I've followed the Middle Way Path to know suffering's end.

October 30—Maturing to Wisdom*

“Wise Understanding has liberation by wisdom as its fruit and is rewarded by the fruit of liberation by wisdom...is helped by virtue, by wide learning, by discussion (of what was learned), by tranquility and by insight.” AN 5, 25

Just as a fruit tree grows slowly from a sapling and bears fruit under the right conditions some seasons later, the Middle Way Path is a gradual progressing experience leading to freedom from self-domination. In the end the many practices and offerings are only the proverbial finger pointing the way. What counts is making the effort to meditate, have Wise Reflection, follow the Five Wise Actions, and develop a clarifying concentration, to be responsible for one’s thoughts, speech and actions. The Noble Truths insights and release are a liberating experience, free from self-obsession and suffering’s end.

To make things simple, you only have to be presently aware and not taken in by habits carrying over as craving. Connect with the Enlightenment Aids: Awareness as a present recognition (body, feelings, mind and life-actions), not be side-tracked by sense-contacted impressions; Investigation discerns impermanence and the Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action cycle; Energy directs one away from self-obsessed mental states; Rapture as relief is experienced; Tranquility as release from a self-obsessed nature; Concentration focuses the mind to realize the unconditioned release from self-domination; and Equanimity as abiding at peace from self-struggles.

The Noble Truths clarify life to know suffering’s end and the breakthrough to the Unconditioned Realm. The Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind, self-deception is eradicated (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self). A consistent Wise Reflection is followed. Insight Meditation is a practical and personal realization. A Middle Way appreciation from the self extremes is experienced. As an Accomplished One, equanimity as liberation is known. The Ultimate Reality is realized—Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

On a practical level, trying to do too much is exhausting. Worldly pursuits are a distraction and unfulfilling. Note how the self-burden affects the body as well as

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charges the mind. Discerning the true nature of life and reality, realize the misplaced delusion and self down fall to know liberation.

I've released my self-attachments. The quieter and concentrated I become, the better I understand life. Self is a handicap.

October 31—The Ultimate Reality*

“Whatever states are included there compromised by form, feelings, perception, mental reactions or conscious attention: he views those states as affliction, as alien, as disintegrating, as empty, as non-self. Having viewed them thus, his mind then turns away from those states and focuses upon the [Ultimate Reality]: “This is peaceful, this is sublime: that is, the stilling of all formations, the relinquishment of all acquisitions, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, Nirvana.” AN 9, 36

Incomprehensible by the distracted and fickle self-afflicted mind, Nirvana is the Four Noble Truths supreme realization penetrating to the Ultimate Reality. Unconditioned and Unfabricated, Nirvana neither creates nor is created. The further shore is only known and experienced through discerning the Four Noble Truths wisdom-clarification and applying the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path bringing craving to cessation. A fulfillment and peace beyond categorizing and description, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind as clarifying wisdom is realized. The residue of past actions, this body/mind manifestation is the last. Self-delusion doesn't form again.

Mature, noble and wise, as an Accomplished One discern the profound freedom from self-domination as suffering ends. The Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action cycle is stopped. Craving for desire, self-identity and as an escape impotently fall away. Acknowledge how the self-compulsion and habitual impulses have ended. The three conditioned (Sense, Fine-Material, and Immaterial) realms exert no influence or power. The purposeful action for each existence is distinguished and how they are marred by a self-involved delusion. Misunderstanding eradicated, the self-blindness are lifted (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self).

The Conditions Arising cycle is defunct (“When this exists, that comes to be; with the arising of this, that arises. When this does not exist, that does not come to be; with the cessation of this, that ceases” SN 12, 62, 2): misunderstanding (ignorance) is cleared by a penetrating wisdom; in turn motives or mental formations don't form; a present consciousness isn't invoked; a body/mind identity doesn't arise; sense organs no longer are validated; sense impressions are mute; contact isn't engaged; feelings aren't overwhelming; craving for desire, self-identity and as an escape don't take place; pressured attachment is dropped; commitment isn't engaged; becoming

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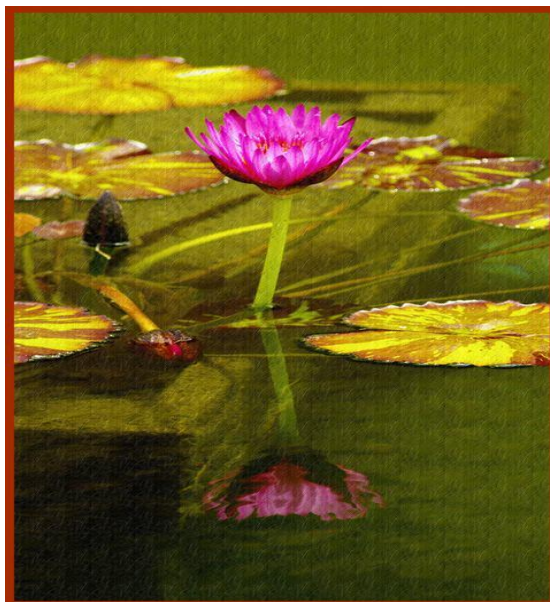
isn't manifest; life and death instances aren't born out; and suffering doesn't take place.

Through the Enlightenment Aids focus to penetrate the Four Noble Truths Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance and know the Ultimate Reality: Awareness for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions as having no self-significance; Investigation directs wisdom comprehension to realize the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle; Effort is applied stopping self-serving ways; Rapture is known as a relief from self; Tranquility is experienced as a wisdom detachment from self; Concentration focuses as a Noble Truth experience to realize suffering's end and the breakthrough to the Unconditioned Realm; and Equanimity as an Accomplished One liberated and having ended all self-consumed ways.

Always right before me, my self-obsession didn't allow me to know life. The Four Noble Truths are penetrated and the Ultimate Reality is known.



**NOVEMBER—
An Accomplished One—Noble, Perfect and Wise**



The goal to the further shore and liberation isn't a fairytale, but is penetrated and experienced as an Accomplished One (or Arhat—'worthy one' or 'noble one') who has rightly realized the profound Four Noble Truths wisdom and followed the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path ending self-suffering. To put things into perspective, you willed yourself to be the person you are, mistaking the Five Groups of Self-Attachment as a self-identification. Through Insight Meditation the true understanding for life and reality is realized. While the body may experience discomfort and pain, as an Accomplished One the mind is freed from self-associated inference and reactions.

As an Accomplished One it is impossible that one harm another living being, steal, engage in intimate physical relationships, tell a conscious lie, over indulge in sensual experiences, or have bias based on desire, hatred, or confusion. Dedicated to renunciation and restraint, freed from all self-attachments, one isn't provoked and moves easily in the world. In day-to-day dealings you are compassionate and equanimous. Previously careless and impatient and carried away by strong habitual impulses, Wise Reflection is centered on the Noble Truths wisdom clarification and the cessation of self-promoted actions.

Self-deceived blinders pulled away (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self), experienced and known is the Ultimate Reality. This present body/mind manifestation is the last. When the body's energy runs out and freed from all self-associations, one passes to the Unconditioned Realm. Penetrating the full scope of the Four Noble Truths, Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion and suffering's end is known.

November 1—Self-Promotion Ceasing*

“Whatever states are included there compromised by form, feeling, perception, mental reactions or conscious attention: he views those states as affliction, as alien, as disintegrating, as empty, as non-self. Having viewed them thus, his mind then turns away from those states and focuses upon the deathless element: “This is peaceful, this is sublime: that is, the stilling of all formations, the relinquishment of all acquisitions, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, Nirvana.” AN 9, 36

Cessation from self-promoted actions is reflected in a calm abiding, but more specifically as mental freedom. Previously taken in by sense-contacted impressions (eyes/forms, ears/sounds, nose/scents, tongue/tastes, and skin/touch), they are mistakenly related to as self-experiences. Through the threefold Middle Way of perfect and blameless conduct-virtue, focused meditation-concentration and penetrating insight-wisdom, life and reality are correctly understood. The Sense, Fine-Material and Immaterial Realms are regarded as self-centered illusions. Wisely Reflecting, the Four Noble Truths Wisdom-Liberation is discerned.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, center on the breath's quality and awareness grounded on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions, an Accomplished One doesn't fall into self-obsessed behavior or is led astray by compromising habits. Craving's urgency linking past habits, present intentions and future actions ended, stopped is the pursuing and clinging to all body/mind self-identification. Equanimity as relief and release stands out, the breath is naturally free-flowing and the mental state is without self-perception. Follow as Wise Reflection recognizes the true nature of life and reality as purposeful actions and turns to discern the Unconditioned Realm.

The Enlightenment Aids focus to penetrate the Noble Truths Wisdom-Liberation. Aware of the Conditions Arising causes and effects generating craving, suffering stops. Acknowledge the relief as no self-burden is taken up. Distinguished is an 'action-less' and selfless freedom giving way to recognition of the Ultimate Reality. Whether detrimental and unwholesome or beneficial and wholesome, one realizes how all conditioned actions relate, extended to and follow a self-illusion. Misunderstanding clarified, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind is experienced (the Noble Truths wisdom realization and Middle Way deliverance).

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Correctly recognizing the body as compounded (the Four Dynamics), feelings as sense-contacted stirred impressions (pleasant, painful and neutral), the mind and mental states as passing thought reactions (personal history), and life-actions directed as purposeful action (Conditions Arising causes and effects)—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature, the four awareness factors aren't taken as I (identity), mine (craving after) or as self (conceit).

Self-obsession ended, follow the Noble Truth penetration and cessation from self-promoted craving. Wise Reflection intensifies as an intuitive Middle Way Wise Understanding. Wise Intention joins with Wise Effort to stop and prevent detrimental mental states while allowing for beneficial insightful mental states. Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration follow as one settles to experience craving's cessation. The Four Noble Truths penetrated, the body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification is released.

The work is done regarding the Four Noble Truths: self is suffering; craving as a cause of continued suffering; craving ceasing, suffering ends; and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to deliverance. Rightly released, one's wisdom is unwavering. Residing in a personally experienced fulfilled liberation, misunderstanding (ignorance) is clarified. Self-identity cooled, craving quenched and associated conceit extinguished, Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends.

I'm freed from my self-obsession. I can never again be that person who desired, hated, or was confused.

November 2—The Vision and Understanding*

“But as soon as this knowledge and vision of mine—with its three rounds and twelve permutations concerning these Four Noble Truths as they actually are—was truly pure, only then did I claim to have directly awakened to the unexcelled right self-awakening...The knowledge and vision arose in me: ‘Unshakable is my release. This is the last birth. There is now no further becoming.’” SN 56, 11

Steadfast, strong, resolved and Wisely Reflecting, as an Accomplished One the Noble Truths Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance is penetrated.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, follow how the breath’s quality, physical repose and one-pointed concentration turns away from self and worldly distractions. The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed through Stream Entry passage to final deliverance (from a misplaced body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification). Another self-version isn’t substituted here, but the misunderstanding leading to suffer is clarified.

Insight Meditation centers on the breath’s quality to Wisely Reflect on the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. The habitual buildup and craving after the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification, manifested subtly and not so subtly is suffering. The body emanated tension and pain (face drawn, jaw locked, shoulders hunched, stomach and pelvic pressure), then there was the psychological unsettling and frenzy of flashing thoughts and mental disturbances. Acknowledge the actual stress and gripped burden carrying over from a self-associated suffering.

A deluge of unsettling habits, acknowledge how restlessness and being distracted affect the conscious mental dialogue. Note the shift and move away from a self-centered focus. The body relaxed through meditation and the mind settles as an open-flowing consciousness. Patiently, compassionately and wisely engaged, you have prepared through Insight Meditation and the Middle Way’s threefold appreciation of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom. Discerned is the Four Noble Truths vision and significance. The self-charade ended, craving after is brought to cessation.

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Penetrated is the non-self insight and freedom. Wisely Reflecting, whether viewing and considering the Five Groups from within or through external sources, all arise and fade as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements. There is no unique self-source or identity.

The Four Noble Truths—Penetrated as a true knowing and release: the Signless Deliverance as recognition for compounded actions rather than seeing self-expression or a separate identity; craving's compelling urgency as a cause of suffering, the Desireless Deliverance is known; craving and associated motives stopped, the Emptiness Deliverance is realized; and the Middle Way Path followed to deliverance, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind is known. Realized is the Ultimate Reality, the Unconditioned Realm.

The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path—Stream Entry passage and fruition: Wise Understanding for the Noble Truths as wisdom recognition; Wise Intention transforms desire through renunciation, hatred through goodwill, and ill will through compassion, reining in dominating habits; Wise Speech forms thoughts into wholesome expressions; Wise Action directs actions through awareness and responsibility; Wise Livelihood as the rightful endeavor and application associated with ending suffering; Wise Effort stops and prevents detrimental mental states while cultivating and maintaining beneficial, insightful mental states; Wise Awareness clarifies life and reality as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self impersonal nature; and Wise Concentration unites the Middle Way experience as a profound recognition penetrating the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana.

The Seven Enlightenment Aids—Focusing as a Noble Truth recognition: Awareness realizes the non-self Ultimate Reality; Investigation penetrates the purposeful action within the three conditioned realms as dissatisfying and turns to recognize the Unconditioned; Energy as the effort, dedication and renunciation directing one to deliverance; Rapture as settled through renunciation, craving is subdued; Tranquility as the abiding relief from cessation; Concentration as the Supreme Noble Truth Unconditioned Realm recognition; and Equanimity is the fulfillment from having ended suffering.

The work is done regarding the Four Noble Truths: self is suffering; craving as a cause of continued suffering; craving ceasing, suffering ends; and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to deliverance. Rightly released, one's wisdom is unwavering. Residing in a personally experienced fulfilled liberation, misunderstanding (ignorance) is clarified. Self-identity cooled, craving quenched and associated conceit extinguished, Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends.

A long and challenging journey, I've fulfilled the Noble Truths vision and understanding. I realized suffering's end to be free of the self-charade.

November 3—The Mind Freed*

***“In one who
has gone the full distance,
is free from sorrow,
is fully released
in all respects,
has abandoned all bonds:
no fever is found.***

***“...emptiness
and freedom without sign:
their trail,
like that of birds through space,
can't be traced.***

***“Effluents ended,
independent of nutriment,
their pasture—emptiness
and freedom without sign:
their trail,
like that of birds through space,
can't be traced.” DH 90, 92-93***

Whether standing, walking, sitting or lying down, irregardless of the position or situation, one is keenly aware, responsible and has control over sense faculties and thoughts. Released from craving's compromising domination, worldly events appear as child's play. The karmic catastrophe and suffering consequences are stopped. Without preference, pleasure or disdain, a simple life is followed through the basic requirements for food, clothing, shelter and medicine. Directed away from a self-construed misunderstanding, the Noble Truths clarify life and reality. The Middle Way Path directs one to the further shore and the liberation of the Unconditioned Realm.

Habitually dominated thoughts, speech and actions ended, no longer generate self-related repercussions and disengage from the Conditions Arising causes and effects suffering cycle. The Sense, Fine-Material and Immaterial Realms are self-

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defined states. Not attached to these experiences, self-identification doesn't absorb one. As an Accomplished One, suffering's end is realized.

Sense Realm Insight:

The present Sense Realm is the most tormenting and suffering of the three conditioned realms. Dominated by the senses, physical gratification and fulfillment were sought, leaving one perpetually dissatisfied.

Awareness Penetration as Insight: Initial Contact acknowledges self-related stress; Sustained Contact directs the mind to identify the physical and mental disturbances; Interest relaxes the present dissatisfaction and separates from the causes involved; 'Joy' rather than reacting impulsively as a self actor, follows a Middle Way appreciation; and having One-Pointed Clarity is an active awareness and Wise Reflection for the Four Noble Truths clarification of life and reality.

The Fine-Material Realm Absorption: The Fine-Material Realm is highlighted by a deepened concentration and mental stability as sense contacts and impressions are weakened and less dominating. Nevertheless the state is impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self, impersonal nature. A misunderstanding of life and reality, the Fine-Material Realm follows the Conditions Arising purposeful action cycle associated with self-related delusion.

The Seclusion Absorption

Meditation provides and is a 'seclusion' from sense distractions and disturbances related to Sense Realm activities. Acknowledge the separation and detachment from over the top self-indulged ways. Wisely Reflecting, recognize tranquility without sensory agitation, allowing sensual activity to subside. Feel the separation from the coarser Sense Realm preoccupation. Without the contributing factors, dormant, active and transgressing habits aren't engaged. Experience the Seclusion Absorption reflecting a non-self experience as well as compromising actions ceasing.

Recognize how the Seclusion Absorption conditions are brought about, the purposeful action involved as well as how one is instrumental in directing awareness. Note the relief, settling, well being and fulfillment experienced.

The Concentration Absorption

As an awareness removed from sensual engagement, one enters the Fine-Material Concentration Absorption. Note as the discursive monologue, persisting habit energies and compelling intentions decline and fall mute (a 'Noble Silence'). Disengaged, feel how the impulse to act out and fulfill a self-related ideal settles down. Experience the present concentration connection as the mind composes to

separate from overt Sense Realm distractions. Acknowledge the composed attention.

Recognize how the Concentration Absorption conditions are brought about, the purposeful action involved as well as how one is instrumental in directing awareness. Note the relief, settling, well being and fulfillment experienced.

The Equanimity Absorption

Equanimity is more than an undisturbed tranquility, but also an ease, confidence, fulfillment, and realization that comes about from renunciation and restraint for sensual activity. Weakened is the self-directive. The moment as centered and settled, equanimity is experienced as a tranquil awareness disengaged from Sense Realm arousal. Note how craving's compelling nature is calmed to a natural and refined equanimity. Not actively involved in pursuing craving, the Equanimity Absorption deepens.

Recognize how the Equanimity Absorption conditions are brought about, the purposeful action involved as well as how one is instrumental in directing awareness. Note the relief, settling, well being and fulfillment experienced.

The Detachment Absorption

Equanimity gives way to the Detachment Absorption as a neither-pain-nor-pleasure experience not associated with sensual onslaught or overt self-reference. With all the drama and hyperactivity connected with the Sense Realm absent, know the depths of this settled capacity and recognition. Unrestricted and not bound by sensory identification, a neither-pain-or-pleasure tranquility is experienced; not to experience sensory indulgence or a dominating self-reference (yet a lingering conceit remains). Tranquility is a penetrating redirection from self. Recognize how conditions as causes and effects are generated and uphold a self-delusion.

Recognize how the Detachment Absorption conditions are brought about, the purposeful action involved as well as how one is instrumental in directing awareness. Note the relief, settling, well being and fulfillment experienced.

An Accomplished One recognizes the underlying habit intentions clung to as self. Craving is subtler here in the Fine-Material Realm, but nevertheless just as damning and leads to suffering. Acknowledge how craved after instances are established by self-directed motives. The subconscious revealed (dormant, active and transgressing habitual tendencies), the Fine-Material Realm is upheld by a refined self-association. A detached awareness, an intensified Wise Reflection stands out.

Without self-indulgence and reacting to painful or pleasurable extremes, a self-image doesn't form. Feel the absence and relief as a weightless unburdening. One-

Pointed Clarity as a Detached Absorption is highlighted. Undisturbed and not complicated by self-delusion, experience tranquility as a penetrating mindfulness. As a Fine-Material Absorption, absent is all the drama and hyperactivity connected with the Sense Realm.

The conditioned states have their causes and effects as self-directed action. I don't react impulsively, but Wisely Reflect to see the action involved.

November 4—The Mind Freed Continued*

*“The mindful keep active,
don't delight in settling back.
They renounce every home,
every home,
like swans taking off from a lake.” DH 91*

Immaterial Realm Absorption: With all physical and material attachments dropped, the pure psychic dimensions of the Immaterial Realm are known. Highlighted by long enduring bliss (there is no body or physical form here), the Immaterial Realm is nevertheless impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self impersonal nature. While suffering is less obvious, stress and friction nevertheless in the form of a subtle conceit is manifested. A misunderstanding of life and reality, the Immaterial Material Realm follows a self-absorbed delusion.

Infinite Space: Removed from physical and material distractions, the Immaterial Awareness directs as a concentrated realization not only for how conscious actions form but the underlying dominating self-delusion. Conscious intentions are recognized.

As an Infinite Space absorption, acknowledge how a self-identity forms as a thought impression. Note how craving instances link consciousness through desire, a self-identity and as an escape. A self-conceit remains around which all other actions revolve and gravitate towards. Allow the experience to move and fade through the Infinite Space of mind.

Recognize how the Infinite Space Absorption is brought about, the purposeful action involved as well as how one is instrumental in directing awareness. Note the relief, settling, well being and fulfillment experienced.

Infinite Consciousness: Focused and discerning as an Immaterial Awareness, you hover in a space of pure mind energy. Conceit is nothing more than a pin-point instance as the mind narrows around a beguiling thought impression. With intentions not forming (greed and hatred are dormant), thought impressions pass without being engaged. Noted is how motives pulsate without reacting to them.

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Follow the Immaterial Awareness absorption to an Infinite Consciousness expansion.

Recognize how the Infinite Consciousness Absorption is brought about, the purposeful action involved as well as how one is instrumental in directing awareness. Note the relief, settling, well being and fulfillment experienced.

‘Nothingness’ or ‘Emptiness’: Directed as a Wise Reflection, the Immaterial Awareness Absorption as ‘Nothingness’ or ‘Emptiness’ without self-associated attachment is experienced. In ‘Nothingness’ there is no overt self-burden. Not craving or clinging to, an ‘empty’ atmosphere is experienced (without place, time or setting). No pleasure, no satisfaction, nor is ‘nothingness’ indulged in upholding a self-ideal.

Recognized is how the ‘Nothingness’ or ‘Emptiness’ Absorption is brought about, the purposeful action involved as well as how one is instrumental in directing awareness. Note the relief, settling, well being and fulfillment experienced.

Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception

Directed as a Wise Reflection, the Immaterial Awareness Absorption as Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception is experienced. No overt self-conceit arises to divide or judge. Focus doesn’t narrow as a self-consciousness to engage in self-promotion. With no restricting self-reference, a Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception Immaterial Awareness stands out.

Recognize how the Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception Absorption is brought about, the purposeful action involved as well as how one is instrumental in directing awareness. Note the relief, settling, well being and fulfillment experienced.

An Accomplished One penetrates the Four Noble Truths wisdom recognition and follows the Middle Way Path deliverance. Realized is how conditioned states play out as self-upholding causes and effects.

Self-directed intentions and actions don’t consume me. I realize how self is manifested from my ignorance leads to suffering.

November 5—Fearless*

“Whatever fears arise, all arise because of the fool, not because of the wise man...Therefore, you should train thus: ‘We shall be wise men, we shall be inquirers.’” MN 115, 2.

A body/mind self-identification is worrisome. What to do next, needing, keeping up with the Jones, the foreboding of illness and death—all reflect a self-associated fear. The self actor is insecure. Expectations and plots are rebuffed, leaving one dissatisfied. Subconscious intentions thrived as dormant, active and transgressing habitual expressions. Discerning the moment, Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation are settling. Wisely Reflecting, negative compromising energy is slowly released rather than struggling with the situation. The Middle Way doesn't indulge or follow aggressive extremes, but is a wise appreciation. No longer careless, impulsive or emotional, an Accomplished One deciphers the self-hoax. Now liberated from self-fabrication, the body relaxes and the mind settles freed from self-obsession.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, craving's cessation is realized. Not relating to worldly distractions and exploits, greed is abandoned, hatred abolished, and with the misunderstanding as confusion ended, there is no fear. Concern and worry over the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification falls away. Closer to a nightmare, self-turmoil is recognized. Connecting with the breath, feel the shift as a penetrated awareness dissolves fear. Opening to a calm Middle Way observance, fear lifts away. Relief, settling, joy and tranquility prevail. The negative compromising energy is released and dispersed. As a Wise Reflection, discovered are how self-related tendencies form.

Penetrating the Noble Truths is a fearless recognition. Only self is fearful, worried and confused. While there is physical suffering in this final body manifestation, an Accomplished One is undisturbed, confident, and realized. Misunderstanding or

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ignorance is clarified. The Middle Way as deliverance, the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm is known.

Upholding a self-esteeming identity caused fear, desire, hate, worry and confusion. What will happen to me? How do I get along? What next? More, less, inconvenienced, dissatisfied, having expectations—the self actor stumbled along, was weak and uncertain. Penetrating the non-self insight and realizing craving's cessation, the Four Noble Truths experience and insight are a fearless recognition. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification, after all, are a misunderstanding of life. Clung to is a body/mind obsession—body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention. As a non-self recognition, there is nothing in or about self to fear. A product of so many conditions, pressures, influences, and elements, the many actions give the illusion of the 'one' or self. This isn't an extinction or spiritual suicide, but rather life and reality are clearly seen as they are—as non-self purposeful action.

The restlessness and distracted attention felt at the start of past meditations is in part related to self-associated fear along with a general misunderstanding of life and reality. Settled and centered, acknowledge how the breath's quality reflects a self-exaggerated fear. Sometimes obvious, at times subtle, always self-absorbed, follow how the self actor is unnerved and restless. Worries about work and family or general uncertainties as well as a one-sided view of life and death, self-deception is unsettling. Attachments and extreme reactions push one into a corner to defend and uphold a self-image. From a misperception of life and reality as self-related, a fear-based suffering follows.

Self-grasped clinging relaxed, feel the gradual release of facial tension, jaw dropping, shoulders relaxing, chest opening outwards along with abdominal and pelvic pressure easing. Acknowledge the body/mind obsession that is the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (physical discomfort, a deluge of sense-contacted feelings, perception as a judgment and bias, conditioned mental reactions as deep-seated habits, and conscious attention as a self-perplexed awareness). Fear of heights, a phobia of crowded rooms or close quarters, ill at ease and insecure, the long list is all centered around self-related fear. Discerning non-self, the Four Noble Truths are a fearless recognition overcoming self-delusion. Life and reality are clarified.

Plagued by subconsciously driven habits, self was your own creation. The Four Noble Truths wisdom reveal suffering's end—craving's cessation. Directed away from self-related fear, the Middle Way approach from self extremes is followed. Conditioned Arising causes and effects, penetrating the Noble Truths a liberated fearlessness is known.

There is nothing to fear. I was deceived by my self-assumption. Realizing the Four Noble Truths, I'm fearless.

November 6—This Final Body/Mind Residue*

“A ‘position,’ is something that [an enlightened one] has done away with. What [an enlightened one] sees is this: ‘Such is form, such its origin, such its disappearance; such is feeling, such its origin, such its disappearance; such is perception... such are mental fabrications... such is consciousness, such its origin, such its disappearance.’...With the ending, fading out, cessation, renunciation, and relinquishment of all construing, all excogitations, all I-making and mine-making and obsession with conceit—is, through lack of clinging/sustenance, released.” MN 72

This present body/mind manifestation is the residue as consequence of self-promoted greed, hate and confusing actions as well as craving after and misunderstanding reality. Handicapped by self-dominating habits, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification played out with disastrous results. Thoughts, speech and actions followed a self-compromising conditioned pattern. This is closer to masochism.

As an Accomplished One, a liberating insight-wisdom is recognized. Like a sun exhausted of all its energy, this last remaining body/mind residue now pales. No longer dominated by sense-contacted actions, craving subsides. Misunderstanding done away with (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self), penetrated is the Noble Truths Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. Faultless, responsible and discerning, actions aren't self-serving and don't go on to produce self-compromising consequences.

Without the involved conditions reinforcing self, one is released to know the Unconditioned Realm. Self-obsession eradicated, acknowledge the Noble Truth clarity and freedom experienced from craving's cessation. Following the Middle Way

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Path, self-promotion is no more. The Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle is defunct.

The breath's quality reflects cessation's relief and awareness as Wisely Reflected, the Noble Truths are realized—how craving carries in this present Sense Realm experience. Self-obsessed attachments (for the body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention), through Stream Entry passage self-reference is eradicated on all levels. Thoughts, speech and actions don't generate self-related consequences. Actions are now defined by Proper Wisdom.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, with craving after no longer active, an abiding equanimity as relief and release from suffering's end stands out. The Noble Truths fulfilled, experience the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind as a wisdom clarification. Self-delusion ended, self-related hindrances are freed. Whatever physical pain maybe experienced, a self-assumption doesn't dominate. Fulfilling the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path, freedom from all self-related sorrow, lamentation, grief and despair is known.

Whatever the situation, experience or encounter one is unmoved and unaffected by worldly events. Discerned is the purposeful action downfall associated with self-willed intentions generating disastrous results. Without judgment or bias, realize how each person is responsible for their actions. But you remain patient, caring, accepting and share goodwill. Following the Stream Entry passage, the Noble Truths penetrated, you cross over to the Unconditioned Realm.

I related to life as self. Disappointed is how I came away. Realizing the Noble Truth recognition, my suffering ways have ended.

November 7—Your Dedication as an Accomplished One*

“You are liberated and dedicated to renunciation seclusion, unafflicted, the end of craving, the end of attachments, and having penetrating wisdom.” AN 6.55.

An Accomplished One abides in and is dedicated to renunciation, seclusion, being unafflicted, craving ended, attachments released, and having wisdom.

Dedicated to Renunciation

“You are liberated and dedicated to renunciation...” AN 6, 55

Renunciation isn't a denial or escape, but a realistic view for self-expressed worldly drawbacks, disadvantages and compromises. Self fruitlessly sought definition, safety, pleasure, to flee, was fearful and tried to establish a secure foothold.

Renunciation along with restraint, sense-contacted desired experiences are clearly seen by their causes and effects. Noted are sense impressions of eyes/forms, ears/sounds, tongue/taste, nose/smell and skin/touch.

Renunciation and restraint applied, craving's cessation as delight and pleasure is about releasing the desire and greed associated with self-identification. Greed and desire compel one to crave, generating future actions. As an Accomplished One, discerned is the true nature of life and reality to do away with both desire as well as hatred.

There is nothing worthy or satisfying relating to self. The emperor without clothes exposed, the self-charade is released. An Accomplished One renounces all sentimental fondness for worldly pursuits and distinguishes craving's role. Following the Middle Way Wise Intention, renunciation counters greed and desire, goodwill counters hatred, and compassion counters ill will. Distinguished is the role intention

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plays and how it affects life. Wise Effort promoted beneficial insightful mental states while Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration lead to craving's cessation. A Middle Way suffering free appreciation, renunciation and restraint are a reasonable way to live simply, honestly, and responsibly.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, note the 'cooling' down from sense-contacted impressions as well as the elimination of the habitual self runaround. Dormant, active and transgressing habits eradicated, conceit and the accompanying restlessness are mute. Craving after as delight and pleasure driving one to act and react is eradicated. Discerning the divisiveness caused by self extremes. Feel how the breath's quality, physically states as well as attention are released from the subconsciously compelled karmic monologue.

The Noble Truths wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions as having no true self-nature; Investigation directs as Proper Wisdom to realize the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle; Effort is applied to stop self-serving ways; Rapture is known as a relief from self; Tranquility arises as detachment from self; Concentration focuses the Noble Truth experience to realize suffering's end and the Unconditioned Realm breakthrough; and Equanimity as the freed abiding of an Accomplished One having ended all self-consuming ways.

Relief, release and liberation known, fulfilled and at peace, equanimity stands out. Rightly seeing life and reality as an Accomplished One, the Noble Truths wisdom recognition is discerned. The Middle Way Path is followed as deliverance from craved after, self-promoted suffering.

No longer waving a self-banner, I renounce self. Not provoked and desiring, I don't fall into self-driven compromising actions.

November 8—Dedicated to Seclusion*

“You are liberated and dedicated to seclusion...” AN 6, 55

Worldly events spin in their self-consuming ways but you have stepped away from the dizzying runaround. The Middle Way Path doesn't follow the extremes of indulgence and gratification or hostility and aggression, but rather an intuitive Wise Reflection and maturing wisdom on your part. With self-entanglements put aside, one resides as an Accomplished One at peace. Seclusion isn't an escape but joins as equanimity to a liberated and fulfilled abiding. The Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle ended, you are relieved, steadfast and unperturbed. Self-interactions are ended. Not involved in mundane pursuits, one nevertheless has compassion and is caring without reserve.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, follow the breath's quality and Wise Reflection. Separated from worldly affairs, acknowledge the equanimity associated with seclusion. Sense the tranquility as well as keen recognition for life and reality without self-obsession. No longer physically charged or mentally disturbed, sensory actions no longer distracting or consuming, you abide released. Self-antics dismissed, one resides in the well-being from having overcome self-addiction. Acknowledge the relief and clarification from penetrating the Four Noble Truths. Breathing is calm and attention settled, awareness is profound. Through seclusion one connects with the Unconditioned Realm.

The Noble Truths wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions as having no true self-nature; Investigation directs wisdom to realize the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle; Effort is applied to stop self-serving ways; Rapture is known as a relief from self; Tranquility arises as detachment from self; Concentration focuses as a Noble Truth experience to realize suffering's end

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and the Unconditioned Realm breakthrough; and Equanimity as the freed abiding of an Accomplished One having ended all self-pursued and self-consumed ways.

Relief, release and liberation known, fulfilled and at peace, equanimity stands out. Rightly seeing life and reality as an Accomplished One, the Noble Truths wisdom recognition is discerned. The Middle Way Path is followed as deliverance from craved after, self-promoted suffering.

No longer side-tracked or involved in meaningless pursuits, I realize how and why I lived. I've finished with my suffering ways to know peace. This is true seclusion.

November 9—Dedicated to the Unafflicted*

“You are liberated and dedicated to the Unafflicted...” AN 6, 55

Harming, cruelty, hatred and oppression—self is suffering. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are a deception, an exaggeration and gross misunderstanding of life and reality. An uncontrolled and over-indulged imagination gives way to a false sense of self-importance as suffering. With the Noble Truths affirmed, one is unburdened and unafflicted by self-charged conflicts.

Feel how harmful intentions keeps one on edge and gives way to aggressive reactions. Note how the mind flitted about. Recognized are the obvious signs of racing heart, twitching muscles, facial tension, dry lips and abdominal pressure while hands fidget or close into fists and a foot taps nervously. Wisely Reflecting, stress disperses through a Middle Way observation. Following Wise Intention connect with the subconscious mental dialogue to positively deal with challenging situations. A Noble Truth recognition, follow how harmful intentions arise from conditioned impulses and actions.

Compassion is often taken to be a weakness. But to the contrary, compassion is nurturing, healing and brings rightful closure to difficult and challenging experiences. Everyone is treated the same without judgment or preference and inclines to wisdom. Harming is detrimental and self-engaged while compassion is open, accepting, caring, responsible and even tempered. As a Middle Way appreciation, Wise Intention gives way to compassion rather than harming.

Self-intention swirled around, flashed and whispered softly, seeking an outlet. Harming is a suffocating reaction, affecting one physically as a painful stress. Breathing becomes labored, blood pressure rises and adrenaline increases. Slowly

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relax. Feel how everyday distractions and habits dominate. Following the breath's quality and mind settling, relief is felt as harmfulness disperses and flows out.

Settled as concentrated awareness, thoughts are controlled directing intentions and actions. Motives follow as compassion. Guarding your awareness, compassion is a reasonable way to live simply, honestly, and responsibly. Wise Reflected, through Wise Intention, recognized is the subconscious mental dialogue to positively deal with challenging situations.

As a Noble Truth recognition, discern the conditioned forming impulses. No longer overcome by careless self extremes, penetrated is the liberated well being, equanimity and fulfillment. Distinguishing the Noble Truths insight, suffering ends. Craving doesn't arise to give way to affliction. Realized is the wisdom penetrating the Unconditioned Realm. With self-obsessed interest ended, you abide unafflicted.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, follow the breath's quality and penetrating Wise Reflection. Feel the well being as unafflicted (specifically not fearful, threatened or overwhelmed by self-concerns). Through the wisdom breakthrough as an Accomplished One, discerned are the drawbacks and consequences to both detrimental and beneficial actions upholding a self-notion. Known is what it is NOT to suffer and the underlying self-promoted conditions involved. The Noble Truths liberating wisdom stands out. Wise Intention to not harm and relate compassionately, joins with Wise Effort to eradicate all self-associations. Self-consumed actions no longer flourish. One isn't afflicted as a self actor, but is untroubled, uncompromised and clear-minded.

The Noble Truths wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions as having no true self-nature; Investigation as Proper Wisdom to realize the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle; Effort is applied to stop self-serving ways; Rapture is known as a relief from self; Tranquility arises as detachment from self; Concentration focuses the Noble Truth experience to realize suffering's end and the Unconditioned Realm breakthrough; and Equanimity as the freed abiding of an Accomplished One having ended all self-pursued and self-consumed ways.

Relief, release and liberation known, fulfilled and at peace, equanimity stands out. Rightly seeing life and reality as an Accomplished One, the Noble Truths wisdom

recognition is discerned. The Middle Way Path is followed as deliverance from craved after, self-promoted suffering.

The Middle Way Path directed me. I'm no longer afflicted as a self actor.

November 10—Dedicated to Craving's End*

“You are liberated and dedicated to craving's end...” AN 6, 55

Penetrating the Noble Truths wisdom, craving's compelling urgency is brought to an end (for desire, self-identity, and as an escape). Not caught up in the Conditions Arising causes and effects, suffering is stopped. Self-identification as well as subconscious compromising habits are eradicated. The self-monologue fallen mute, self-expression isn't engaged. Acknowledge the relief, release and fulfillment. Liberated and at peace, equanimity stands out. Rightly seeing life and reality as action based (the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one'), the Noble Truths liberating wisdom is penetrated. The Middle Way Path guidance brings one to experience craving's cessation and the end of self-promoted suffering.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, follow the breath's quality and penetrating Wise Reflection. Feel the fulfillment and well being from craving having ceased. Follow the spaciousness to be released from craving's habit-driven urgency. The Emptiness Deliverance as cessation is known; from careless to wisely engaged. With craving stopped, acknowledge how self-attachment fades and a wisdom recognition stands out. Physically settled and mentally clear, karmic actions are cut off by the Noble Truth wisdom breakthrough. Craving after as delight and pleasure ended, acknowledge the Middle Way deliverance. The actions of an Accomplished One don't generate or give way to suffering consequences. Misunderstanding clarified, realize the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

The Noble Truths wisdom-recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions as having no true self-nature; Investigation directs as Proper Wisdom to realize the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle; Effort is applied to stop self-serving ways; Rapture is known as relief from self; Tranquility arises as detachment from self; Concentration focuses the Noble Truth experience to realize suffering's

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end and the Unconditioned Realm breakthrough; and Equanimity as the freed abiding of an Accomplished One having ended all self-consuming ways.

Relief, release and liberation known, fulfilled and at peace, equanimity stands out. Rightly seeing life and reality as an Accomplished One, the Noble Truths wisdom recognition is discerned. The Middle Way Path is followed as deliverance from craved after, self-promoted suffering.

Guarded and vigilant of my sense contacts, I'm not vulnerable to craving. With my self-motivation ended, craving doesn't follow.

November 11—Dedicated to Attachment's End *

“You are liberated and dedicated to attachment's end...” AN 6, 55

The body/mind association for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification is impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self, impersonal nature. The body is like foam, feelings are like bubbles, perception is like a mirage, mental reactions are like a plantain tree without true hardcore, and conscious attention is like a magic show. Self-construed attachments along with accompanying habits are craved after and generate suffering consequences. The body weakens, arises and fades; feelings as pleasant, painful and neutral, arise and fade; perception as identification and bias, arises and fades; mental reactions reflect a personal history, arise and fade; and conscious attention thrives around compounded action sequences, arise and fade. The Noble Truths recognition clarify life and reality.

Through Stream Entry passage exorcised are the last remaining habit fetters. Penetrating the Four Noble Truths, misunderstanding as ignorance is lifted. Acknowledge the relief, release, and fulfillment as liberation. Noble, perfect and wise, as an Accomplished One, the Four Noble Truths are penetrated and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path followed to deliverance. Released from self-attachment and now at peace, equanimity stands out.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, realize how a self-fantasy was fulfilled. Strained facial muscles, eye tension, jaw clenched, as well as abdominal and pelvic pressure, thought impressions narrowed to plot a self-directed course of action. With habit fetters eradicated, one turns away from self-promoted tormenting to know cessation. Craving's urgency is cut off. Released from self role playing, the Noble Truth wisdom recognition is affirmed; from self-attached to the unbound freedom of the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana.

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The Noble Truths wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions as having no true self-nature; Investigation directs as Proper Wisdom to realize the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle; Effort is applied to stop self-serving ways; Rapture is known as a relief from self; Tranquility arises as detachment from self; Concentration focuses the Noble Truth experience to realize suffering's end and the Unconditioned Realm breakthrough; and Equanimity as the freed abiding of an Accomplished One having ended all self-consuming ways.

Relief, release and liberation known, fulfilled and at peace, equanimity stands out. Rightly seeing life and reality as an Accomplished One, the Noble Truths wisdom recognition is discerned. The Middle Way Path is followed as deliverance from craved after, self-promoted suffering.

I mistakenly identified with self. I now realize how I suffered. Through the Noble Truths clarifying wisdom and following the Middle Way Path, I released my self-charged attachments.

November 12—Dedicated to Penetrating Wisdom*

“You are liberated and dedicated to penetrating wisdom...” AN 6, 55

The Noble Truths realization is an active wisdom experience penetrating life and reality without a self-warped misunderstanding. Realized is how self-directed actions lead to suffering as well as how other people are brought to their own downfall. The only way to freedom is through the Four Noble Truths distinguishing wisdom as exercised, applied and fulfilled through the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path.

The Four Noble Truths are all encompassing and beyond the conventions of time, culture, history or self-limitations. Practical, accessible and personally penetrated, the Truths are the diagnosis as well as the cure for self-delusion. Acknowledge the relief, release, liberation and peace as equanimity as fulfillment stands out. Rightly seeing life and reality as action based (multiple actions giving the illusion of the ‘one’), Proper Wisdom for the Noble Truths is penetrated.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, Wise Awareness discerns the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identified illusion so desperately clung to as a self-actor. Life and reality are recognized as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Wise Effort went on to extinguish craving. The Fourth Noble Truth (the Middle Way Path) brought one to experience craving’s cessation and the end of self-promoted suffering. Dedicated and diligent, an Accomplished One realizes the Supreme Noble Truth—Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

The Four Noble Truths are a profound recognition: the First Truth clarifies self as an illusion and is a non-self Signless Deliverance; the Second Truth highlights craving’s role leading to continued suffering as a Desireless Deliverance; the Third Truth recognizes craving’s cessation as an Emptiness Deliverance as suffering’s end; and

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the Fourth Truth is clarifies misunderstanding through the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path fulfillment as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

The Noble Truths wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions as having no true self-nature; Investigation directs as Proper Wisdom to realize the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle; Effort is applied to stop self-serving ways; Rapture is known as a relief from self; Tranquility arises as detachment from self; Concentration focuses the Noble Truth experience to realize suffering's end and the Unconditioned Realm breakthrough; and Equanimity as the freed abiding of an Accomplished One having ended all self-attachment.

Relief, release and liberation known, fulfilled and at peace, equanimity stands out. Rightly seeing life and reality as an Accomplished One, the Noble Truths wisdom recognition is discerned. The Middle Way Path is followed as deliverance from craved after, self-promoted suffering.

The Four Noble Truths clarify life. Released from the self-charade, my suffering ends.

November 13—The Conceit ‘I Am’ Eradicated*

“...all I-making, mine-making, and the underlying tendency to conceit...is liberated through not clinging.” MN 72

Within the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification, there is nothing that pertains to a unique or separate self. Conceit forms around a mistaken self-view and limited awareness. The Noble Truths are a personal intuition and clarification of life and reality. Deep seated self-attachments are victimizing and keep one from knowing the Ultimate Reality.

The preoccupation, the unsettling, the fondness, the worry, the needing, the compelling habitual actions, all swirled around a self-consumed conceit. As long as conceit remains, the impermanent is mistaken as permanent, what is suffering seems satisfying, and the non-self is taken to be self. Strengthened and directed by the Middle Way Wise Effort, Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration, an Accomplished One sees through the causes and effects relating to conceit (self-attached domination). The overt habits of desire and hatred along with craving after are eradicated.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, note how conceit formed from misunderstanding life and reality. Acknowledge the stress as well as inflation as self-conceit occupies space and creates an illusion of time (rather than action related) through a self-centered focus. Craving after as delight and pleasure carries over to compromising actions. The many conditions, pressures, influences and elements join in charging conceit. The Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action is overwhelming. Much like a bell reverberates and hums softly after it is rung, so too did conceit remain as an after shock restlessness tied to a self-fantasy.

Following Wise Reflection as an intuitive wisdom, the self actor role playing and accompanying attachments are dropped. A deep sighed relief, the conceit hindrance is released and the Ultimate Reality realized. Without engaging in the Conditions Arising causes and effects buildup, self-associated conceit disperses. Misunderstanding done away with, the Noble Truth wisdom recognition perceives the Unconditioned Realm.

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The Noble Truths liberating wisdom recognition unifies in intensity and refined insight through the Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness recognizes the narrowed self-obsessed focus; Investigation penetrates the conditions and actions involved in self-deception leading to suffering; Effort now arises as Wise Concentration to penetrate the Noble Truths as Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind; Rapture as dropping all worldly distractions blurring reality; Tranquility is experienced as self turmoil is stopped; Concentration as the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is fulfilled; and Equanimity as relief and release from suffering's cessation stands out.

*Like being in a fog, conceit enveloped me. The Four Noble Truths clarifying life—
I'm free from myself!*

November 14—Cessation*

***“For a person
 forced on by his thinking,
 fierce in his passion,
 focused on beauty,
 craving grows all the more.
 He’s the one
 who tightens the bond.
 But one who delights
 in the stilling of thinking,
 always mindful
 cultivating
 a focus on the foul:
 He’s the one
 who will make an end...” DH 349-350***

The self actor engaged in detrimental as well as beneficial actions. Both acts, however, involved craving to a greater or lesser extent, following the Conditions Arising suffering cycle. Only the faces, names and places changing, repeated are the same self-obsessed miscues. Life was misunderstood. But the Four Noble Truths as clarifying insight and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path applied lead to Stream Entry passage and liberation. With self-absorbed intentions and craving ended, the further shore is known.

Realizing craving’s role and forward compelling nature, subconscious dormant, active and transgressing habits are released. With craving ceasing, the Conditions Arising cycle halted, cessation from self-torment is known. Acknowledge how self-directed motives stopped from escalating to craving. With craving’s urgency as delight and pleasure eliminated, self-suffering was brought to an immediate end. The Four Noble Truths clarification penetrates self-misunderstanding. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification, body, feelings, perception, mental reactions, and conscious attention are dropped.

Worldly events pass, but craving or self-related expressions don’t arise. The relief and release as an equanimous abiding stand out. The subconscious chatter stopped, one is freed from the compelling habits and a self notion. Discerning the

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purposeful action within all conditioned states, the Unconditioned Realm is realized. Acknowledge the fearlessness not to be taken in by a self-deceived misunderstanding. The Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind, the Noble Truths wisdom recognition and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path are followed to deliverance.

The Sense, Fine-Material and Immaterial Realms have self at their center and are conditioned worlds driven by causes and effects purposeful action. Presently calm and patient, Wisely Reflect on life. Intentions expose the willed actions of a self actor. If it weren't for the Four Noble Truths wisdom recognition as deliverance there would be no end to suffering. Personally experienced, the Middle Way stresses Wise Understanding of the Noble Truths as a non-self deliverance. The ending of all self-affected ways, Nirvana is also known as the 'Deathless.' Removed from the self-promotion for living out 'life and death' self-expressed scenarios, a 'Deathless' intuition is realized.

Craving's cessation to the 'Deathless' realization is challenging because one is used to the high-powered energy show that is self. The Noble Truths are a Proper Wisdom clarification. This isn't something one struggles to attain but quite the opposite, as a Middle Way experience eradicating self-directed charged habits. Cessation comes from penetrating the Four Noble Truths and the release from craving as delight and pleasure.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, follow the breath's quality from stressed and anxiousness to an intensified Wise Reflection. Renunciation and restraint applied, slowly emptied is the hourglass-like of accumulated habits. Acknowledge the subduing of self-promoted craving to a released relief. Experienced and discerned differently through meditation, sitting for an hour or more seems like 5-10 minutes. Self is dictated by contact, stimulation, action and an off-base self-delusion. Sense the slow release from the habitual obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification.

The body calms down (facial muscles stretching, jaw dropping, shoulders down, and chest, abdominal and pelvic areas softening). Note the relief from the self-turmoil. Craving after is exhausting and a bewildering suffering. Experience the equanimity as detached relief from distractions and impulsiveness. The mind clears to an intuitive Wise Reflection. Following the Four Noble Truths, craving's urgency is quieted as self-promotion falls away.

Follow the arising and fading associated with the body, feelings, mind and life-actions. Physical sensations and pressures arise and fade; feelings as pleasant, painful and neutral arise and fade; thoughts arise and fade; and life-action experiences arise and fade. Removed from worldly demands, released are

impulsive habits and self-consuming thoughts. With self-reference cut off, the 'Deathless' is known or not giving 'birth' to a self actor or self association.

As an Accomplished one, realized are the Four Noble Truths wisdom recognition: the First Truth as a Signless Deliverance from the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification; the Second Truth as a Desireless Deliverance from craving leading to suffering; the Third Truth as an Emptiness Deliverance for craving's complete cessation; the Fourth Truth as clarification follows the Middle Way Path guidance ending self-suffering to the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

Meditation has brought me to a personal revelation and deliverance—the cessation and freedom from self-obsession. Suffering is no more.

November 15—Peace*

“Beings who can assert to be without illness of the mind are difficult to find in the world, without the exception of one who is free from the taints [the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self].” AN 2, 143-144.

In the Sense, Fine-Material and Immaterial Realms self-delusion distorts reality. Greed, hatred and confusion, critical views, discrimination, coming out on top, to vanquish or be vanquished, (even the blissful attachments within the Fine-Material and Immaterial states), are generated and play out as a mistaken (ignorant) self-identification. Anything less than a Noble Truth liberating wisdom is undermined by craving and closer to insanity.

A debilitating mental illness and disease, self-attachments and craving after are a suffering. As a physical and mental stress now released from the self-charade, note how the breath’s quality is calm and reflects liberation as cessation. Wisely Reflecting, the habit-driven history is recognized and the Ultimate Reality penetrated. Healed, relieved and all the wiser, equanimity stands out. Self-delusion stripped away by following the Noble Eightfold Path, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind is experienced.

As an Accomplished One, conditioned causes and effects don’t degrade wisdom. Happiness doesn’t depend on or follow self-related craving. Having realized the Noble Truths wisdom and fulfilled the Middle Way Path, true liberation and peace follows. Whatever changes affect the body, the mind is clear and Wisely Reflecting. The absence of self-associated sorrow, lamentation, grief and despair, psychological short-comings and hindrances are cut off. Noble perfect and wise, an Accomplished One is fulfilled, has pure mental health, and has profound wisdom and understanding.

Relieved, released and equanimous, liberated from the self-burden, the further shore is crossed to the Unconditioned Realm. As an Accomplished One, one’s actions are a mere ‘doing’ without self-conspiring motives. This is the last body/mind manifestation.

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Abandoning lust, abolishing hatred, uprooting the self-notion and accompanying conceit, the Noble Truths liberating wisdom is penetrated. The ultimate peace, the Unconditioned Realm is experienced.

Craving after and my self-delusion done away with, I've finished with my suffering ways to know the ultimate peace.

November 16—Deliverance*

“Of all the kinds of signless deliverance of mind, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind is pronounced the best. Now that Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind is void of lust, void of hate, void of delusion.” MN 43

Personally experienced, understood and wise, as an Accomplished One you realize suffering's end. The Signless Deliverance, the Immeasurable Deliverance, the Void Deliverance, the Emptiness Deliverance, and the Unshakeable Deliverance stand out.

The Signless Deliverance

The First Noble Truth reveals self-attachment and associated problems as revealing the answer to suffering. Insight Meditation as a settled Wise Reflection discerns the Signless Deliverance that is the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (stress in the body, for contacted feelings, as an off base perception, disturbing mental reactions, and confused conscious attention).

Impermanent, the body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention arise and fade as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements. The self actor exposed, self only knew greed, hatred and confusion, was careless, indulgent and craved after, all played out through the Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action cycle. Feel the shift from misunderstanding to the non-self insight that is the Signless Deliverance. As long as one remained attached to self, there was suffering.

Behind the self-impressions and feelings, behind the body/mind obsession, the Signless Deliverance recognition undercuts the craving for a body/mind obsession. Insight displacing self-illusion, realized is the Signless Deliverance.

The Immeasurable Deliverance

Self only knows the fiction related to and involving self-deception. Through Insight Meditation's settling and the Middle Way appreciation, wisdom expands to an all encompassing, limitless recognition penetrating the Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm. Turning from the myopic view of the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention), the Conditions Arising cycle is discerned (the many in the 'one'). Wisely Reflecting, the Four Noble Truths clarify life and reality and the Middle Way Noble

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Eightfold Path is followed to deliverance. Craving after (for desire, a self-identity and as an escape) brought to cessation, the self-view is dropped and the Immeasurable Deliverance recognition to the Supreme Noble Truth is known—Nirvana. Realized is the Immeasurable Deliverance.

The Void Deliverance

Released as a renunciation that is 'void,' free, vast, open and without self-definition, acknowledge the relief as separating from a self-absorbed gravity. Craving isn't consuming as self-identification is released.

Self-identification diffused, voidness or emptiness as release from body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention is experienced. Wisely Reflecting, equanimity as freedom is a naturally abiding. Wisdom is greater than self-absorbed attachments. Self-obsession shrinks and fades to a Void Deliverance. With craving's cessation, self-habitual turmoil doesn't generate suffering episodes.

A Void Deliverance, habits defused and craving ceasing, self-conceit and the accompanying restlessness fall away. Release is experienced from all self-tainted mental obstacles to know suffering's end. Distinguished are the causes and effects purposeful action involved. Penetrating the Noble Truth liberating wisdom for a self-promoted ordeal, realized is the Void Deliverance.

The Emptiness Deliverance

Paradoxically, problems are a salvation. No easy task, only you alone, through Wise Effort and the Noble Truths breakthrough insight, bring an end to the self-suffered madness. Following the Middle Way Path, craving ceases and misunderstanding is clarified. Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends, an Emptiness Deliverance is experienced.

The Four Noble Truths liberation is realized—true recognition of the present, for how conditions arise, how conditions cease, and the Middle Way followed to deliverance. Craving as the link to continued suffering brought to cessation, the Emptiness Deliverance to suffering's end is experienced.

Self-promotion subsiding, acknowledge the fulfillment and release that is the Emptiness Deliverance along with the equanimity as relief that comes from craving's cessation. Not measured or defined by the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification, the Emptiness Deliverance is realized.

The Unshakeable Deliverance

The Four Noble Truths wisdom recognition clarifies reality, dislodging the self-absorbed delusion. Craving is stopped and suffering ends; not identifying or

delighting in or pursuing a self-connection. An Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind is realized.

Certain and undeniable, misunderstanding clarified (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self), the supreme Noble Truth for the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana is experienced. The Unshakeable Deliverance is realized.

Wise Effort, Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration unify the Middle Way Path as a liberating deliverance to realize the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana.

Delivered from self, craving ended, suffering ends. The ultimate fulfillment or is known.

November 17—The Compassionate One*

*“Calm is his mind,
calm his speech
and his deed:
one who’s released through right knowing,
pacified,
Such.” DH 97*

With greed abandoned, hatred abolished and misunderstanding uprooted, the Immeasurables of loving-kindness, compassion, shared joy and equanimity are genuinely expressed, offered and communicated. Thoughts, speech and actions reflect boundless and unconditional goodwill, patience, concern and fellowship. A source of consoling, leadership and benefit, as an Accomplished One a calm and peaceful demeanor settles and reassures others. Whatever help can be offered, is shared without hesitation. But in most cases being a good listener is all that is required.

An Accomplished One is without self-gain or exploitation and is a shoulder of support and generosity to all. Patience radiates from one guided by sincere compassion and a liberating wisdom. Free from self-domination, realized are how others are affected and succumb to their self-indulged ways. Gauged and distinguished are how to best deal with and support others. You are a resource of guidance and healing.

Loving-Kindness—Offered is goodwill and support along with acceptance and patience. Loving-kindness is the antidote for resentment and ill will.

Compassion—A genuine sympathy for people as well as their circumstances is felt, wishing that everyone be helped and relieved of their suffering. Loving-Kindness begins in a general way while compassion focuses on those who are afflicted. Cruelty, harshness, maliciousness and harming are abandoned.

Shared Joy—Fulfilled in your own life, one rejoices in others’ happiness and good fortune. No one is disparaged as everyone is considered a friend. Shared joy leads to the arising of rapture.

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Equanimity—Freed from self-dominated identification, a candid understanding allows one to be without judgment or expectations. Patient, open and flexible, others are welcomed as equals and friends. Equanimity lends to acceptance and understanding. Only so much can be realistically done. In the end all beings are responsible for their actions. The worldly ways or vicissitudes as short-comings are realistically kept in mind as well as the Five Remembrances (aging, sickness, death, loss and responsibility). Equanimity goes on to counter aversion as well as attachment. Self-directed pride is humbled.

Settled and equanimous, focused and centered, the Immeasurables turn away self-consumed gains, as well as bitterness and anger, to an open concerned and caring person. The transformation taking place over time, now joins with and heightens the Noble Truths wisdom clarification to discern the Unconditioned Realm.

Awareness and goodwill go on to serve both you and the other person as a compassionate healing. Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance translates as a compassionately shared insight. When encountering greed one is generous; when encountering hatred or hostility kindness is offered; when encountering confusion, a calm patience is shared. Like a gardener planting and nourishing seeds, one understand that results aren't always immediate, but come about under the right circumstances and at the appropriate season.

I've come to know compassion in my life and to now be healed. Forgiveness and acceptance as closure have allowed me to move on. I regard everyone as a friend and offer my goodwill. There's no ill will in me. As I've been helped, so do I help others.

November 18—Unsurpassable*

“When a [person’s] mind is thus liberated, he possesses three unsurpassable qualities: unsurpassable vision, unsurpassable practice of the way, and unsurpassable deliverance.” MN 35

The Noble Truths profound vision, knowledge and understanding, and following the Middle Way Path to deliverance, are ‘unsurpassable.’ A Wisely Reflected insight experience, the Accomplished One penetrates the Noble Truth wisdom recognition to the Unsurpassable Vision, Unsurpassable Achievement and Unsurpassable Deliverance.

The Unsurpassable Vision

Self is an off base and gross misunderstanding of reality, caught in the self-promoted Conditions Arising suffering cycle. The Unsurpassable Vision, the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed through Stream Entry passage as deliverance. Recognized is life as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Self-deception (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self), is clarified.

Focused and discerning as an intensified Wise Reflection, acknowledge craving’s cessation no longer generating suffering consequences. The breakthrough to the Unsurpassable Vision that is the Supreme Noble Truth is penetrated, Nirvana.

The Unsurpassable Achievement

The Middle Way Path followed, the Noble Truth wisdom recognition gleaned, the Unsurpassable Achievement is fulfilled. No greater reward is possible than the end of self-promoted suffering. This is all that can be asked and achieved. The self extremes for gratification and indulgence and aggression and hostility dropped, the Middle Way side steps the self-pitfalls and follows the Four Noble Truths liberating recognition. Life and reality clarified, the Middle Way threefold approach of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration, and insight-wisdom is realized. Freedom from self-deceived misunderstanding is experienced.

Focused and discerning as an intensified Wise Reflection, acknowledge craving’s cessation no longer generating suffering consequences. The breakthrough to the Unsurpassable Achievement that is the Supreme Noble Truth is penetrated, Nirvana.

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The Unsurpassable Deliverance

Applying the Five Wise Actions as a moral compass along with the Middle Way emphasized conduct-virtue, the Four Noble Truths insight to liberation is discerned. Key has been Wise Intention as renunciation and restraint along with Wise Effort as unskillful detrimental mental states are reduced and eliminated while skillful and beneficial mental states are promoted. The 'Unsurpassable' achieved, suffering ended, wisdom penetrated, realized is the Unconditioned Realm.

Settled and equanimous, focused and centered, acknowledge how the Four Noble Truths and Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path have brought and end to self-obsessed suffering. Self-identification and compromising habits eradicated, craving as delight and pleasure eliminated, acknowledge the relief, peace and fulfillment known. Personally experienced and understood, an Accomplished One is released to know the Ultimate Reality. Nirvana is the supreme, unconditioned state as cessation without self-reference or self-promotion. Discerned as an intensified Wise Reflection, acknowledge craving's cessation no longer generating suffering consequences. Breaking through to the Unsurpassable Deliverance, the Supreme Noble Truth, Nirvana is experienced.

After much diligence, personal reflection and understanding, I'm free of self-domination and realize the Ultimate Reality.

November 19—The Fearless*

***“There are no painful mental states,
in one without longing.
In one whose [habits] are ended,
all fears are overcome.” THAG 16, 1***

Self-absorbed attachments lead to fear, insecurity, hatred, doubt, worry and confusion. The Four Noble Truths as wisdom is a ‘fearless’ recognition as there is nothing within or about self that is true, real or fearful. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification as a grand-illusion are a misunderstanding of life and reality (multiple actions give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self). Penetrating the Four Noble Truths, one is fearless.

Self extremes for greed and hostility pushed one into a corner. Recoiling to defend and uphold a highly prized self-image, note how the breath tightens while thoughts narrow as a fearing self-consciousness. Craving after as a delight and pleasure highlights insecurity. Self was one’s own creation, obsessing, fear and troubled self-delusion.

Consumed by aversion, unable to cope, anxious and confused, insecurities are hobbling. Nothing goes right as angry outbursts made everything wrong. Acknowledge the resistance and recoil both physically and mentally, viewing the moment as a threat. From having certain dislikes to being short tempered, ill-will and aversion reflect a self-exaggerated, fearful domination.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, acknowledge the release from self extremes to be without fear. An Accomplished One penetrates the self-hoax that for so long was a torment. Rightly recognizing all conditioned states along with their causes and effects, Proper Wisdom is distinguished. The Four Noble Truths clarifying insight as a Wise Reflection overcomes self-delusion. Life and reality clarified, the Four Noble Truths reveal the Ultimate Reality—Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference or self-promotion as suffering ends.

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As a self actor I was anxious and worried. As a liberated recognition, I've finished my worrying over a self actor that isn't real.

November 20—The Further Shore^{*}

“The near shore, dubious and risky’ stands for self-identification. ‘The further shore, secure and free from risk’ stands for Nirvana.” SN 35, 197

With self-expressed greed, hatred and confusion cut off and not generating craving, life is clarified through the Four Noble Truths. Misunderstanding’s imposing burden lifted, self-identification is never again to register and suffering ends. Crossing over to the further liberated shore, the Unconditioned Realm is realized.

A personal recognition, the Four Noble Truths are known and experienced and the Middle Way Path is followed to deliverance. A fulfillment and peace beyond categorizing and description, with self-reference dropped, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind is known.

It is wondered by those who have yet attained the noble release, what happens after death. Still tied to a bewildering self-view, such perplexity and off base questioning relates to and reveals a yet lingering self-conceit and incomplete understanding. The person has yet to realize the Noble Truths liberation from craving. Life, birth, death and suffering simply don’t apply and aren’t a true reflection of reality (but rather many actions give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self). With no unique or individual self, there are only related causes and effects as purposeful action. The Unconditioned Realm or Nirvana isn’t connected to self-conceived deception.

Closer to earthquakes turning life upside down, craving after, attachment and suffering, the self actor and worldly pursuits don’t dominate. Now Wisely Reflecting, an Accomplished One discerns the Noble Truths Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. Penetrated is the Conditions Arising affects of this present Sense Realm, self-attachment and craving as well as the Middle Way Path deliverance. The further shore Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana is realized.

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The Enlightenment Aids penetrate the Four Noble Truths Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance and the Unconditioned Realm: Awareness for the primary four grounded areas (body, feelings, mind and life-action); Investigation defines the Four Noble Truths to the emptiness release from self-promoted actions; Effort ends detrimental mental states and actions; Rapture is known as relief from self-promotion; Tranquility as fulfillment is experienced; Concentration distinguishes the Noble Truths insight and suffering's end; and Equanimity is the detached abiding that comes from liberation.

Not an escape, repression or rejection, but the natural result as wisdom for suffering ending, the Ultimate Reality stands out. Realized as a direct wisdom experience, the Supreme Noble Truth, the Unconditioned Realm is discerned. Finishing with this current body/mind manifestation, the Accomplished One then passes to Nirvana.

I see how my actions revolved around a self-fantasy and I was led astray. I'm finally done with putting Humpty-Dumpty back together again.

November 21—Healed and Cured*

“Now what is the noble truth of the origination of stress? The craving that makes for further becoming—accompanied by passion and delight, relishing now here and now there—i.e., craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, craving for non-becoming [escape]...And what is the noble truth of the cessation of stress? The remainderless fading and cessation, renunciation, relinquishment, release, and letting go of that very craving.” DN 22

Stress, worry, desire, easily rankled and fearful, self is a weakening sickness. Sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair are the suffering symptoms. The Four Noble Truths identify self as the illness and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path as the cure. The prescription of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom is the full-course treatment. With misunderstanding (ignorance) lifted, one is cured of self-compromising intentions. With the Five Groups of Self-Attached obsession (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention) done away with, one is healed.

Desire pursues self-identification or attempts to escape, craving stands out as a cause to the illness. Like an infecting germ, craving flourishes in the present, but carries over from a misconstrued self-involved past, and goes on to thrive as a future manifestation. The illness follows the Conditions Arising causes and effects suffering course. The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is the cure for the self-consumed disease.

Acknowledge the ‘dis-ease’ as in being unwell, ill, stressed, bothered, having problems, distracted and the undermining affects of greed, hatred and confusion. By first meditating the disease is slowed and put into remission. Dosages of loving-kindness are injected, patience developed, the Five Wise Actions applied, a basic moral control established, a Middle Way appreciation experienced then Wise Reflection penetrates the Four Noble Truths. The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path goes on to discharge the self-infection to finally be cured through penetrating the Noble Truth Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. With misunderstanding clarified, well being is experienced and the Ultimate Reality is known.

Needing dedication, resolve and time to mature, the Middle Way Path follows Stream Entry passage. From here the self-illness can never again become virulent.

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Stream Entry acts as a detoxification. The world isn't rejected so much as one doesn't engage in upholding a self-centered toxicity. Noble, perfect and wise, an Accomplished One is healed of his/her self-afflicted illness. This body/mind manifestation is the left over residue from a long illness. The Four Noble Truths realized, the Unconditioned Realm is penetrated.

Settled and equanimous, focused and centered, acknowledge the well being and the relief through renunciation having brought craving to an end. With conceit ended, restlessness abates, and misunderstanding is clarified (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self), the Four Noble Truths recognition penetrating the Unconditioned Realm.

The self wound goes on to close and heal. Misunderstanding clarified, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind is experienced. One resides in the enlightened recognition that is the Noble Truth Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance—Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

The illness grave, the treatment required dedicated meditation and Wise Reflection. My self-antics as craving were the germs, and misunderstanding the soiled source. I've finished with the craving that prolongs the illness.

November 22—Liberation*

“The way leading to the cessation of the taints is just this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, Wise Understanding, Wise Intention, Wise Speech, Wise Action, Wise Livelihood, Wise Effort, Wise Mindfulness and Wise Concentration.

“When a noble disciple has thus understood the taints, the origin of the taints, the cessation of the taints, and the way leading to the cessation of the taints, he entirely abandons the underlying tendency to lust, he abolishes the underlying tendency to aversion, he extirpates the underlying tendency to the view and conceit ‘I am,’ and by abandoning ignorance and arousing true knowledge he here and now makes an end of suffering.” MN 9

Suffering’s end and liberation came as a gradual maturing insight. The classic symbol is of a lotus emerging from muddy water. The bud grew up slowly through the darkness towards the warming sunlight then broke through the water’s surface to brilliantly bloom. An Accomplished One no longer generates self-associated actions or has craving leading to suffering consequences. All self-related deception is dropped. Wisdom is gleaned to the true nature of life and reality as a Noble Truth clarification, craving’s cessation is experienced, and the release from self-obsessed misunderstanding achieved. Following the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage, one crosses over to the liberating further shore, the Unconditioned Realm.

On a practical level, trying to do too much is exhausting. Worldly pursuits are distracting, dissatisfying and unfulfilling. Realized is how a self-burden affects the body and charges the mind. Following a consistent Wise Reflection as an intuitive experience, Insight Meditation is a practical and personal realization as a profound awareness for all actions and experiences. A Middle Way appreciation is followed. An Accomplished One resides in equanimous relief from self-promoted actions. The Ultimate Reality is realized.

Follow the calmed breath and settled mind. As an Accomplished One, note how longing and yearning as craving have ceased. The body/mind identification and attachments done away with, the Four Noble Truths wisdom recognition is distinguished. The self-charade is seen through. A profound equanimity is known as suffering ends to the profound peace as liberation.

Consummate in conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, the Middle Way Path climaxes in Stream Entry fruition to the complete release from the

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Five Groups of Self-Attached deception. Follow the breath's quality and undisturbed equanimity. Misunderstanding clarified, Reflected is cessation and liberation as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind. Realized and experienced, Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion for suffering ends is known. Penetrated is the Unconditioned Realm.

All longing and hankering done away with, I'm truly humbled. Realized and released, I turn towards the Unconditioned Realm.

November 23—A Sage at Peace*

***“That place is delightful
where Arhats [Accomplished One] dwell.” DH 98***

Realizing the Noble Truths vision and release, self-promoted actions aren't fabricated nor mentally willed. The one-sided self-perspective dropped, an equanimous release and fulfillment are lived. The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path followed to deliverance, suffering ends. Experience the distinguishing wisdom as understanding penetrates the Unconditioned Realm. Wise Reflection realizes the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind.

The ever-muddled, self-view is no more (I am...I am this...I shall be...I shall not be...I shall be possessed of form...I shall not be possessed of form...I shall be percipient...I shall not be percipient). The conventional notion of time, place, and for life as self are wisely discerned as Conditions Arising causes and effects (the many actions joining to give the illusion of the 'one' or self). The Noble Truth realization penetrates the Ultimate Reality. Self-delusion done away with, there is no craving or becoming as compromising consequences doesn't arise.

All that is cherished is fleeting and illusive. Worldly pursuits play out as a self-charade. Through the awareness of the First Noble Truth one is directed from self-obsessed to penetrate life as signless or of a non-self nature. Wisely Reflecting, the First Noble Truth clarifies life and reality as they truly are—a shot-lived union of ongoing actions and not self. Wise Reflection discerns and goes on to disperse the domination and fixation had for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification.

Rightly seeing life's complexity and deciphering the self-hoax, there is no aging or death. Not dying, there is no suffering. Not suffering, one isn't perplexed. Not being perplexed, longing and self-promotion don't arise. Without a self-priority, Proper Wisdom is known.

Self-identity cooled, craving quenched, and the conceit fire gone out, an Accomplished One realizes the Noble Truths wisdom recognition clarifying self-misunderstanding and ending suffering. Known is the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana. This body/mind manifestation is the last. You are a sage at peace.

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With the self-fairytale ended, I experience true, unconditional peace.

Life Practice

November 24—Done is What Had to Be Done*

Likened to removing a cross bar, filling in a moat, bringing down a pillar, unbolting or freeing the mind, taking down a flag, releasing a burden, becoming unfettered, an Accomplished One ends all levels and degrees of self-identification.

Clarified through wisdom, brought down and shattered to utter rubble and incapable of being erected again, the crossbar-like that was misunderstanding (ignorance) which supported self-delusion is removed.

Having done away with dormant, active and transgressing habits, the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle is halted, the moat or division that was created by self-delusion filled in.

Ending craving's delight and pleasure leading to suffering, the foundation undermined, the pillar that was the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification is torn down.

Eradicating habit fetters and cutting them off at the root, the mind freed from all mental obstacles, the self-deceived grand illusion is done away with, unbolted and freed.

Abandoning all self-reference, in tatters and incapable of being raised again, the conceit flag is brought down. Self-obsession ended, liberating wisdom stands out. Brought to cessation, unfettered and undone, self-habitual urgency falls away. An Accomplished One realizes the Four Noble Truths Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. Misunderstanding clarified, self-promoted greed, hatred and confusion cease and are untangled. The Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind is realized. The Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana is known.

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Realizing the Noble Truths wisdom, follow the profound equanimity as release from the self-burden. Without self-centered motives undermining and prodding, acknowledge the relief. Self sought constant gratification, was fearful, hateful and easily confused. The Noble Truths penetrated—life as purposefully driven action and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. The Unconditioned Supreme State realized—Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends is known.

Never again, self has been released, my ignorance is done away with. What a relief not to suffer. I'm finally sane!

November 25—Steadfast, Unfaltering and Unmovable—Equanimous*

An Accomplished One is freed from the Conditions Arising purposeful action suffering cycle. With craving's cessation and self-delusion done away with, one is released and abides in equanimity. Note how the mind doesn't narrow to a self-absorbed identification, judgment, bias or divisiveness.

Followed as virtuous conduct, meditative composure, and profound insight, equanimity reflects the Noble Truths wisdom affirmation and the Middle Way deliverance. Unmoved by sense-contacted impressions nor disturbed by worldly pressures, craving is brought to cessation. Agreeable or disagreeable sense contacts (eyes/forms, ears/sounds, nose/smells, tongue/flavors and touch/tactile) as well as mundane challenges aren't provoking. An Accomplished One is steadfast, unfaltering and unmovable. Grounded in renunciation and directed by the Four Noble Truths penetrating wisdom, the self-grand illusion is lifted.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, the restless and yearning subconscious dialogue is no longer troubling. Acknowledge how craving as delight and pleasure (for desire, self-identity and as an escape) have ceased. Literally the self actor has been unplugged and the dizzying runaround stopped. The Noble Truth wisdom recognition for self, craving and the Conditions Arising purposeful action are fathomed. With the self-riddle solved, one turns towards the Ultimate Reality. With the passing of this body/mind residue, the Unconditioned Realm is entered. Here liberating equanimity from having fulfilled the Middle Way Path deliverance is known.

Acknowledge the relief and freedom experienced. Without a self-reference there is nothing to prove, pursue, gain or uphold. Released from the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification, craving's compelling domination ceases. Suffering is no more. Confidence, fulfillment and equanimity as a liberated abiding stand out.

Finished with all my self-deception, I am free.

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November 26—Fulfillment*

The liberation of an Accomplished One isn't a fireworks spectacular, but rather a personal fulfillment and deliverance from suffering and the breakthrough discernment to the Unconditioned Realm. One's dedication over these many months to meditation now discerns the Noble Truth clarification, having brought self-deluded craving to cessation.

Acknowledge equanimity as relief and release; ignorance as clarification is lifted and wisdom comes to fruition. Wise Reflection is a personal experience and recognition and not some intellectual wrangling. Whatever passes in this conditioned world isn't attached to as self. With the mind freed of self-attached confusion, this body/mind manifestation is to be the last. Equanimity is more than an undisturbed tranquility, but rather an ease, confidence, well being and realization that comes from fulfilling the Middle Way Path ending suffering. Self-reference and self-promotion is no more. The self-obsessed directive is released.

Focused and discerning, equanimity is experienced as a disengaged awareness from Sense Realm arousal and self-indulged actions. Note how craving's compelling nature as delight and pleasure is neutralized to abide in refined equanimity. Not absorbed in self-pursuits, equanimity reflects a liberated fulfillment.

The Noble Truths liberating wisdom is fulfilled: the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are rightly discerned; craving's undermining role realized; craving's ceasing, suffering ends; and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to deliverance.

Equanimity as freed from suffering is my reward. Desire, hatred, and confusion are ended. I followed the Middle Way Path to realize the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind. The Unconditioned is known.

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November 27—Liberation's Insight*

Established in the Middle Way conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, Stream Entry passage is fulfilled.

This body/mind manifestation is the last. Physical pain may be experienced, but the mind and concentration are grounded in the Four Noble Truths clarifying recognition for self-deluded actions.

Focused and discerning, awareness is established as a one-pointed clarity. Wisely Reflecting, insightful qualities associated with liberation emerge:

- The nature of all conditioned actions as impermanent (actions joining to give the illusion of the 'one') or self.
- Craving's cessation (for desire, self-identity and as an escape) is realized.
- As a Proper Wisdom, the Conditions Arising cycle as purposeful action is discerned (the many giving the illusion of the 'one').
- Desire and hatred ended (dispassion, relief and release known), one isn't attached to anything nor stirred by any conditioned realm experiences.
- Conscious, aware and detached, self-promoted habits aren't taken up and fall away.
- Penetrating cessation—not only craving ceasing and compromising actions stopped, but the cessation as liberation is realized and experienced. The Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana is known.

The Supreme Noble Truth discerned, one's focus turns from self-absorbed to the Ultimate Reality and liberation.

The self-formed fairytale realized, yes, there is a body/mind experience, but there is no unique or individual self. Separated from worldly involvements, renunciation and restraint are followed for sense-contacted desires as well as having goodwill and compassion as Wise Intention and Wise Effort are applied. The Immeasurables of loving-kindness, compassion, shared joy and equanimity transform a hard-edged, self-obsessed personality. The Enlightenment Aids go on to focus as realization the Noble Truths liberating wisdom. Noble, perfect and wise, an Accomplished One you penetrate the Ultimate Reality; Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

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I followed the Middle Way to deliverance. The Noble Truths significance is discerned.

November 28—Wisdom Deliverance*

The wisdom of an Accomplished One:

- Understood are the results of all actions undertaken whether past, present or future along with their contributing causes.
- Understood is the gross misunderstanding of life and reality, leading to suffering destinations as well as the significance of the Noble Truths liberating deliverance.
- Recognized are the three conditioned realms as well as their mental states, consciousness and differing conditions; how self-centered illusions form and play out at each instance.
- Realized are how beings have different inclinations and are responsible for their actions.
- Realized is the self-disposition keeping beings tied to craving and suffering consequences.
- The vision to recollect past lives and rebirths. However, only Wisely Reflecting and discerning the present are you able to deal with and stop suffering.

The Noble Truths wisdom recognition penetrates self-related deception. Seen is how people appear as inferior and superior, fair and ugly, fortunate and unfortunate, all according to their actions (desiring, hateful and confusing or generous, good natured and wise). Not fated, each person must be diligent and responsible. Irregardless of the difficulty, situation or challenge, others are served through your charity, patience and compassion. An Accomplished One you offer goodwill, are accepting and have the wisdom to skillfully direct others to better their lives.

The grand illusion thwarted, craving's urgency eradicated, note how self-deception clears and misunderstanding lifts away. Self is never again to be taken up. Misplaced or inaccurate views don't arise. The self-involved commotion is seen through to the Ultimate Reality. As an intensified Wise Reflection follow awareness

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for the body, feelings, mind and life-actions, penetrating to the true nature of life and reality. Released from the body/mind obsession for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification, you abide in profound liberated equanimity.

Self-identity cooled, craving quenched, and the conceit fire gone out, self-obsession impotently falls away. Realized is the Supreme Noble Truth. Without self-definition, undefined and immeasurable, the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana is known.

I understand how my life has played out. Accordingly, I've ended my self-attachments. I now help others on their insightful journey.

November 29—The 37 Insights*

As a personal and intuitive experience, the Four Noble Truths profound recognition encompasses 37 insights.

The Four Awareness References: body, feelings, mind and life-actions are straight forward, practical and reveal life and reality as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self, impersonal nature underscored by purposeful action.

The Four Wise Efforts: the effort to abandon detrimental mental states; the effort to prevent detrimental mental states; the effort to arouse beneficial mental states; the effort to maintain beneficial mental states, all directed to ending self-obsession and suffering.

The Four Base Powers: energy, persistence, intention, and investigation aid in regulating effort.

The Five Faculties: conviction, energy, awareness, concentration, and wisdom support Wise Reflection to penetrate as wisdom-deliverance.

The Five Strengths: conviction, energy, awareness, concentration, and wisdom mature to realize the Ultimate Reality.

The Seven Enlightenment Aids: Awareness, Investigation, Energy, Rapture, Tranquility, Concentration and Equanimity unify to discern the Four Noble Truths Wisdom-Liberating vision (self as suffering; craving as delight and pleasure carrying over to compromising consequences; craving's cessation; and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path followed to deliverance).

The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path: Wise Understanding, Wise Intention, Wise Speech, Wise Action, Wise Livelihood, Wise Effort, Wise Awareness, and Wise Concentration are followed as Stream Entry experience directed to ending self-suffering and realizing the breakthrough to Nirvana.

Over the course of Insight Meditation and the Middle Way appreciation you have matured to know these 37 insights. While some overlap, together they make up the bridge crossing over to the Unconditioned Realm further shore. The Four Noble Truths encompass a profound Wisdom-Liberating experience.

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An Accomplished One is no longer victim to worldly passions, has control over the mind, while through renunciation and restraint detrimental self-expressions don't arise. Self-delusion is eradicated. Penetrated is the Supreme Noble Truth, the Unconditioned Realm; Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends.

*I've gone from careless, impulsive and craving after discern the Noble Truths
Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance. The self actor and suffering are done with.*

November 30—Liberation*

As a body manifestation, feelings experienced, perception engaged, mental reactions arising or conscious attention followed, are rightly understood as so many conditions, pressures, influences and elements and not taken to be self. The five factors are correctly realized as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self, impersonal nature—not I, not mine, not myself. Not identifying, delighting in or pursuing a self-actor, one isn't measured, categorized or defined by the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Craving after as delight and pleasure ceasing and not giving way to self-promoted actions, liberation as suffering ends is realized. As an Accomplished One, done away with is self-obsession to penetrate the Supreme Noble Truth—Nirvana as liberation.

Follow the shift away from a narrowed and stressful self-view. Craving's urgency eradicated (desire, self-identity and as an escape), the breath and awareness settled, Wisely Reflect on your release. Abiding in equanimity, the Noble Truths are realized and the Middle Way Path fulfilled. The Unconditioned Realm is experienced. Freed from self-obsession, the non-essential isn't mistaken for the essential and the essential is rightly penetrated. Wisdom as a personal recognition, craving doesn't generate suffering consequences.

Acknowledge effort and dedication. Liberation didn't happen over night. Like scaling a mountain, one proceeds in stages, becomes acclimatized, stronger and knowledgeable. Yes, there are challenges and at times the going slow, but it has all been a learning experience. With every mindful breath came patience, caring, closure, understanding and healing as well as a deeper appreciation and recognition of life. The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path has been followed to deliverance, climaxing in the Fourth Noble Truth as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind. Now from the mountain top you look out to see the causes and effects cycle and the self-ordeal which had consumed and dominated your life.

Meditation allowed me to slow down, understand and have insight for my self-delusion. The Middle Way transformed and turned me away from self-taxing habits. Through the Four Noble Truths recognition I realized suffering's end and freedom.

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DECEMBER— The Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana



Being undefined and not part of the three Conditioned Realms suffering ordeal, Nirvana is related to through a series of metaphors, synonyms and analogies.

“...I will teach you the Taintless and the path leading to the Taintless...I will teach you the Truth and the path leading to the Truth...I will teach you the Far Shore...the Subtle...the Very Difficult to see... the Unaging... the Stable... the Undisintegrating... the Unmanifest... the Unproliferated... the Peaceful... the Deathless... the Sublime... the Auspicious...the Secure...the Destruction of Craving... the Wonderful... the Amazing... the Unailing... the Unailing State... Nirvana... the Unafflicted...Dispassion...Purity...Freedom...the Unadhesive... the Island...the Shelter...the Asylum...the Refuge...” SN 43, 14 (3).

Nirvana is the Ultimate Reality and the Supreme Noble Truth recognition as cessation and suffering’s end. There are the three Conditioned Realms—the Sense Realm (dominated by the senses and physical contact), the Fine-Material Realm (weakening of sensory activity along with maturing concentration and insight), the Immaterial Realm (pure psychic or mental potential). All three realms are affected by impermanence and the Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action cycle as well as dominated by an off base self-reference. The self-associated masquerade involved within each Conditioned Realm thrives through craving and follows to suffering.

Through Insight Meditation's practical and personal experience, the Four Noble Truths clarification and the Middle Way Path followed, discerned is the true nature of life as non-self (multiple actions giving the illusion of 'one') as well as the profound reality and liberation that is the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana is without conditioned causes and effects nor is it subject to a self-deceived downfall. The Noble Eightfold Path as deliverance is like the final crescendo of two cymbals (the action to end all self-related action).

As an Accomplished One, wisdom penetrates self-deceived impressions to realize the Unconditioned Realm—without craving after, becoming, birth, aging, death, rebirth or suffering (“There is that dimension where there is neither earth, nor water, nor fire, nor wind; neither dimension of the infinitude of space, nor dimension of the infinitude of consciousness, nor dimension of nothingness, nor dimension of neither perception nor non-perception; neither this world, nor the next world, nor sun, nor moon...there is neither coming, nor going, nor stasis; neither passing away nor arising: without stance, without foundation, without support. This, just this, is the end of suffering.” UD 8.1 and “There is an unborn—unbecome—unmade—unfabricated. If there were not that unborn—unbecome—unmade—unfabricated, there would not be the case that emancipation from the born—become—made—fabricated would be discerned. But precisely because there is an unborn—unbecome—unmade—unfabricated, emancipation from the born—become—made—fabricated is discerned.” UD 3).

Incomprehensible through a self-deceived body/mind identification, Nirvana is without measure, timeless, can't be theorized or conceptualized, nor is defined by normal self-promoted means. A peace and fulfillment beyond description, Nirvana is realized as self-blinders are pulled away (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by misunderstanding life as self). The conditioned, self-promoted craved after states of the Sense, Fine-Material and Immaterial Realms aren't pursued or taken up. As an Accomplished One noble, perfect and wise, consummate in conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom, the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is fulfilled and suffering done away with. Misunderstanding clarified as the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind, Wisdom-Liberating Deliverance is known.

Penetrated by bringing self-related hindrances to cessation, Nirvana as the Ultimate Reality isn't another self-disguise to adhere to, but a clarification, an unburdening and emancipation. Consider it like getting a divorce. The final judgment is passed and achieved; from self-obsessed to an Accomplished One. Without self-vestige remaining, one no longer is infatuated or inclined to pursue and promote a self-identity. Now seeming amusing, all antics are like a child giving up toys, infantile amusements, and immature behavior. You abide in the profound fulfillment that is equanimity as cessation and liberation. Like stepping through a mirror, the self actor

reflection is defunct. Closer to a nightmare, all along what was taken to be meaningful and real was, in fact, a hindrance, distraction and a suffering illusion. Freed from the self-absorbed gravity, you are liberated and never again to give in or be a victim of desire, anger, confusion or crave (desire, self-identification or as an escape). Nirvana is the total release from self-promoted attachments. As an Accomplished One, discerned is the Noble Truth wisdom recognition and fulfillment of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage.

The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. This present body/mind manifestation coming from past inspired self-related actions, is the final residue or flare up and now falls away as exhausted. The misunderstanding blinders pulled away (the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by mistaking life as self), self-identity cooled, craving quenched, and associated conceit are extinguished. Nirvana as liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion as suffering ends is known.

December 1—‘The Taintless...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Life is overwhelmed and undermined by a threefold misperception or tainted misunderstanding of reality—the drive for desire, the drive for existence, driven by mistaking life as self. This delusion or ‘taint’ keeps one at odds as a self actor and climaxes as suffering. Sand castle-like, all plans and schemes are washed away and end fruitlessly. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to the ‘taintless.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Acknowledge misunderstanding’s profound burden. Over the course of these many months self-blindness obscured reality. Through Wise Reflection and wisdom, penetrated is the one-sided misplaced identification as illusion within all three conditioned realms. The Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle clarified: from misunderstanding or ignorance self-directed thoughts form, a present misconstrued self-consciousness arises, a body/mind identity takes place, sense contacts thrive, sense impressions are experienced, feelings engaged, craving arises, attachment follows, a commitment to act takes place, and actions are expressed leading to suffering consequences. Directed by the Noble Truth recognition as a signless (non-self) recognition and realizing the Conditions Arising purposeful action, the self-obsession falls mute. Earnestly followed, the Middle Way Path climaxes in liberation. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

Follow the breath’s quality as heavy, pressured and intense, the self-tainted burden takes a toll as physical illness and mental instability. Self role playing follows. Now the whole of the Noble Eightfold Path experience unites as a Proper Wisdom to penetrate the Noble Truth wisdom recognition and Middle Way Path fulfillment leading to deliverance. As self-obsessed perception and attachments fall away, note how wisdom as clarification arises. Self-deception eradicated, realized is the Supreme Noble Truth and suffering’s ends.

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated

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conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

December 2—‘The Truth...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Nirvana is penetrated as a Noble Truth affirmation. Through the Middle Way Wise Understanding, the Noble Truth foundation directing one as wisdom clarification is discerned. The profound release from self-attachments to the Unconditioned Realm is experienced.

The body/mind attachment for the Five Groupings (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention), Humpty-Dumpty falls over for the last time and is never again to be put back together. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to the liberating ‘the Truth’ that is suffering’s end.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. The Four Noble Truths convey both the realization for what is suffering as well as the wisdom recognition that is suffering’s end, Nirvana. Not accessed as an intellectual understanding or farfetched notion, but through a Middle Way appreciation and clarity as insight for one’s own self-obsessed personal dilemma. Note the tranquility as the subconscious self-consumed prattle falls away. Worldly conditioned pursuits no longer generated, the Unconditioned Realm without self-definition is realized. Turned away from is the fiction that is self and the Sense Realm turbulence to the Supreme Noble Truth; from misunderstanding and ignorance to liberating recognition. Note the abiding and equanimous fulfillment to be released from a self-deluded and one-sided perception. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

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December 3—‘The Far Shore...’ SN 43, 14 (3) *

Distracted and misconstrued, this Sense Realm experience mistakes the impermanent as permanent, the dissatisfying as satisfying, and the non-self as self. The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path (conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom) is applied like a raft traversing worldly pursuits. Life, birth, death and suffering aren't a true reflection of reality. The Unconditioned Realm or Nirvana isn't connected to self-promoted deception. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to 'the Far Shore.'

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Craving after as delight and pleasure (for desire, self-identity and as an escape), self-consumed habits are released and misunderstanding clarified. Acknowledge the emptiness as relief and void as freedom's release. No longer tied to worldly pursuits and Sense Realm attachments to separate from a body/mind identification, known is the 'Far Shore' liberation, Nirvana. Self-promoted urgency is brought to cessation. The Ultimate Reality is distinguished. Acknowledge the abiding in equanimity from fulfilling the Middle Way Path. A journey of discovery, maturing realization and transformation, you cross over to now stepping on to the Far Shore without desire, becoming, birth and death, or suffering consequences. Conceit and restless eradicated along with misunderstanding clarified, self-deception ceases. The Middle Way Path has served its liberating purpose. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

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December 4—‘The Subtle...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Spellbound as a self actor and raging out-of-control, seeking continuous fulfillment, the multiple actions giving the illusion of the ‘one’ or self are ignored. The Five Remembrances of sickness, aging, death, loss and responsible action aided your recognition. Settling down, realized is the Noble Truth clarifying insight to craving’s cessation. The Middle Way threefold Path of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom is fulfilled. Misunderstanding turned to wisdom penetrates suffering’s end. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Subtle.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Following Insight Meditation and applying a Middle Way appreciation, Wisely Reflected on is the subtle nature of life and reality—impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature underscored by purposeful action. Likened to a medical diagnosis rightly defining the malady and the cure, the Four Noble Truths are practical, accessible and the only salvation to end suffering. What stands out is that self and suffering are synonymous. Realizing the self-attached charade, the Four Noble Truths reveal how problems and suffering actually hold the answer. Your Noble Truth realization exposes the emperor without clothes self-hoax and the underlying non-self reality. Naturally renouncing and going on to restrain sense experiences, greed, hatred and confusion are eradicated. Penetrating the subtle wisdom, dropped is the gross body/mind identification. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

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December 5—‘The Very Difficult to See...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

The Noble Truths clarifying insight reveals life and reality as connected and overlapping actions as well as the wisdom recognition ending self-promoted suffering. Making life all the more challenging and difficult, a self-fantasy divides experiences into subject/object, you and other. A misunderstanding or ignorance, not realized are the contributing Conditions Arising factors. Careless, self-obsessed habits dominated.

A false sense of security and attempted control to deal with the constantly changing world, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention) are a deception, craving after and attachment. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to realize ‘the Very Difficult to See.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Penetrating below the level of subconscious driven habits is life’s true nature. The Noble Truths wisdom clarify life and nature. Craving after is brought to cessation along with self-obsessed habits eradicated. What had been an out of control and seemingly impossible to cope with life, the Four Noble Truths and Middle Way culminate in Wisdom-Liberation. Now penetrating the self-hoax and craving’s role in suffering, wisdom recognition comes to fruition. Realized is the Unconditioned Realm. The Middle Way Path as Stream Entry passage brings one to discern ‘the very difficult to see.’ As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

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December 6—‘The Unaging...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

The Ultimate Reality, Nirvana is unconditioned, deathless and unaging. Only a self-defined actor is born, ages, dies and suffers. Beyond the limits of the Conditions Arising cycle, Nirvana isn't fabricated and is beyond time, definition and self-reference, nor is Nirvana tied to conditioned actions and craving after. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to 'the Unaging.'

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Conditions Arising causes and effects play out: misunderstanding leads to mental formations, a body/mind identification, consciousness, sense contacts, sense impressions, feelings, craving after, attachment, commitment, and on to life and death suffering. Self-willed generated actions perpetuate an unending 'birth.' Acknowledge the relief and release from self-deceived misunderstanding. As a fulfilled equanimity one no longer generates self-instances or suffers craving's unfulfilling backlash. Wisdom recognition penetrates 'the Unaging.' An unconditional peace is known, freedom from life and death incurred actions. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

December 7—‘The Stable...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Unchanging and not formed by or related to Conditions Arising self-directed intentions, the culmination of matured and personally engaged wisdom is liberation—cessation from self-reference and suffering actions. The Conditioned Realms arise and fade in an unstable environment, but only the Unconditioned Realm is stable, secure and unchanging. The Noble Truths wisdom recognition discerned, removed from self-deluded pursuits, Nirvana is an undefined and steady-state. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Stable.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Direct by Wise Concentration, self-related causes and effects are penetrated. Acknowledge the equanimity and detachment from Sense Realm related obsessions. With self-obsessed craving eradicated, equanimity is a true stability from fulfilling the Noble Eightfold Path as Stream Entry passage. As Conceit and restlessness abate, misunderstanding clarified, penetrated and realized is ‘the Stable.’ As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 8—‘The Undisintegrating...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Not part of the self-willed purposeful action Conditioned Realms, the Unconditioned isn't defined nor is prone to disintegration. The self actor struggles to maintain and uphold the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feeling, perception, mental reactions and conscious attention). The arising, passing and fading, beyond the self-promoted buildup and craving after, Nirvana isn't realized through self-definition. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Undisintegrating.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Seen as Proper Wisdom, the ongoing Sense Realm tug-of-war turmoil is penetrated. In a state of constant flux, craving after and conceit along with ignorance are a restlessness to fulfill a self-ideal. Now Wisely Reflecting, the Four Noble Truths wisdom recognition is realized. Penetrating the causes and effects purposeful action cycle, ‘the undisintegrated’ is realized. The Unconditioned Realm as liberation removed from the Conditions Arising cycle stands out. Misunderstanding clarified, Wisdom-Liberation is known. Not formed, undefined and unconditioned, Nirvana is an unaffected state. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

December 9—‘The Unmanifest...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

This sense-dominated and conditioned thrived after world is marked by a body/mind illusion, dissatisfaction and suffering. Nirvana is without conditioned manifestation. Wisely Reflecting to a Noble Truth wisdom recognition, one isn't taken in by self extremes for indulgence or hostility. Without self-reference, promotion or definition, the Middle Way Path is fulfilled and the Unconditioned Realm penetrated. Beyond convoluted worldly pursuits and self-construed comings and goings, the Ultimate Reality is ‘Unmanifest.’ The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Unmanifest.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Without self-obsessed directed intentions, craving ceasing, conceit and restlessness ended, the Noble Truth wisdom recognition penetrates ‘the unmanifest.’ Turning away from self-promotion or manifest intentions and actions, realized is self-promotion's end as Unmanifest. Acknowledge the wisdom recognition discerning the Unconditioned State and suffering's end. Beyond body/mind identified limitations is the Unmanifest. Habitual actions eradicated and craving after are brought to cessation. Where conscious identification has no foothold, a sighed relief is experienced as the last breath of self-consumed attachment is released. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

December 10—‘The Unproliferated...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

The building blocks for self are a misunderstanding of life and craving after as delight and pleasure. Without the associated conditions, pressures, influences and elements, self doesn't form to be clung to. Lost in self-obsessed confusion, whatever is focused on, attended to, cognized and defined, this is what one becomes. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Unproliferated.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Experienced through a Middle Way appreciation, the Noble Truths reveal the ‘Unproliferated.’ With craving ceasing, self-promoted actions don't ‘proliferate’ as a compelling habitual urgency. Misunderstanding is clarified and ignorance lifted. Turned away from is self-domination and one-sided views. The threefold Middle Way deliverance doesn't engage in the Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle or generate future consequences. Without self-reference or seeking an outlet of expression, not needing or desiring, ‘the Unproliferated’ stands out. Not developed, produced or following self-promotion, nor generated or established, the Noble Truths wisdom recognition culminates as a breakthrough to the ‘Unproliferated.’ Outside the confines of conditioned causes and effects, acknowledge the separation from Sense Realm craved pursuits. With the mind cleared and focused through Wise Concentration to the Noble Truth confirmation, realized is ‘the Unproliferated.’ As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

December 11—‘The Peaceful...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Not connected to worldly pursuits or expectations, the self-bubble doesn't inflate. Rightly seeing life's complexity without Monkey Mind distractions, desire, hatred and confusion are eradicated and cessation known. The ever-muddled, self-identity view is no more (I am...I am this...I shall be...I shall not be...I shall be possessed of form...I shall not be possessed of form...I shall be percipient...I shall not be percipient). The conventional notion of time, place, and for life as self-related are discerned as Proper Wisdom—Conditions Arising causes and effects (the many actions joining to give the illusion of the 'one' or self). The Noble Truth realization penetrates the Ultimate Reality. Ending the body/mind self-identification; monkey mind distractions controlled, desire, hatred and confusion done away with; craving after brought to cessation, there is no becoming or suffering.

There is no aging or death. Not dying, one doesn't suffer. Not suffering, one isn't perplexed. Not being perplexed, one has no longing and self-promotion doesn't arise. Without self-priority, Proper Wisdom is discerned. As a distinguished Wise Reflection, the Four Noble Truths are realized: the First Truth Signless Deliverance for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification; the Second Noble Truth Desireless Deliverance for craving's role in suffering; the Third Truth Emptiness Deliverance for craving's cessation; the Fourth Truth clarification as the Middle Way appreciation leading to the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to 'the Peaceful.'

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Worldly pursuits playing out as a self-charade, through the awareness of the First Noble Truth known is the signless or non-self nature that is life as joining actions. A fulfillment that isn't craved after and freed from self-identification, there is liberation from the self-promoted obsession and the causes and effects suffering cycle. Liberated fulfillment as cessation is the reward. Following renunciation and restraint, the complete eradication of self-compelled craving and related conditions, unconditional peace is known. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

December 12—‘The Deathless...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

The complete cessation to the ‘Deathless’ is challenging because one is used to of the high-powered energy show that is self. The Noble Truths are a personal recognition to penetrate the ‘deathless’ deliverance as self-associated suffering ends.

Only the self actor illusion goes through a mock life and death. Where there is no life and death related actions and causes and effects, there is suffering. Craving ceasing, self-attachment is severed. Not sought after or born out, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification aren’t taken up. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Deathless.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Self had been a constant craving after tied to self-conceit. Life and suffering were repeated. Now Wisely Reflecting, follow the Noble Truth wisdom clarification to know ‘the Deathless.’ With craving ceasing and all self-urgency cut off, penetrated is the wisdom recognition for the unborn, unfabricated and Deathless State. Acknowledge the ending of self-promoted craving as release relief, tranquility and equanimity. Dictated by contact and action for an off-base delusion, the Noble Truth wisdom recognition penetrates to be free of the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 13—‘The Sublime...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Only through the Four Noble Truths wisdom recognition and the Middle Way Path deliverance is the sublime liberation for cessation and suffering’s end known. Noble and ennobling, inspiring and uplifting, magnificent and auspicious, and transcending the Conditions Arising cycle, the Unconditioned Realm is sublime. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Sublime.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. The Four Noble Truths clarify the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification as insubstantial or non-self. Craving after as well is brought to cessation and suffering ends. The supreme realization as released from self-deluded compromising ways is experienced. The Four Noble Truths wisdom-recognition is immaculate and the Unconditioned Realm is wonderful. Leaving behind all Sense Realm pursuits, passions and promotion, the liberating experience of Nirvana is realized. All self-defilements (desire, hatred and confusion) as well as ignorance lifted, the Sublime State is penetrated. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 14—‘The Auspicious...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Self-obsession is exhausting, saddening, dissatisfying and suffering. The Four Truths wisdom recognition realizes cessation and suffering’s end. Nirvana is auspicious; favorable and beneficial, a happy ending to another wise hopeless situation. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Auspicious.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Wisely Reflecting, followed is a personal realization: the Five Wise Actions counter the role of subconsciously charged habits; the Five Remembrances are a sober recognition of life; Conditions Arising reveals the role of purposeful action; the Immeasurables (loving-kindness, compassion, shared joy and equanimity) are offered; the Monkey Mind Distractions are controlled; insightful and discerning, the Four Noble Truths clarification realizes craving’s cessation and suffering’s end. The self actor drama is brought to a final curtain call. A liberating conclusion, wisdom as personal recognition ends the self-tragedy. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 15—‘The Secure...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Worldly pursuits follow a self-domination and an unsettled craved after urgency. Seeking gratification and permanence, nothing in the three Conditioned Realms is satisfying or permanent. One becomes sick, ages, dies and experience a loss tied to self-promoted actions.

The Four Noble Truths wisdom recognition overcomes all mundane challenges: the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are exposed as a charade; craving after is the link to future suffering; craving’s ceasing, suffering ends; and the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is followed to liberation. All uncertainty, hesitation, questioning, and searching settled, discerned is the one true security, Nirvana. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Secure.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. The insecure conditioned realms are correctly realized as impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and as non-self. Realized is the Secure State that is the Unconditioned Realm without self-definition. No longer generating self-promoted actions, the Ultimate Reality is known. Craving brought to cessation, the Noble Truth clarification turns to realize ‘the Secure.’ Not attached or supporting anything, Nirvana is undoubtable, certain, true and secure. Life’s turbulent nature has no bearing or influence in the Unconditioned Realm. In direct contrast to everyday pursuits, Nirvana isn’t generated or succumbs. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 16—‘The Destruction of Craving...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

The Four Noble Truths discerned, deliverance is real. Worldly pursuits are tied to the self extremes of indulgence and gratification and hostility and aggression. Life just didn't happen, but was willed as a self actor through compromising habits and craving after. Wisely Reflecting, realize craving's cessation (for desire, self-identity and as an escape). The Middle Way transforms compelling habits and allows for Wise Concentration to focus and discern the Noble Truths vision and understanding—the Ultimate Reality. The fulfillment of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Destruction of Craving.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Rightly known and discerned is the true nature of life and reality, Proper Wisdom penetrating craving's role as desire leading to suffering consequences. Renunciation and restraint applied, craving is subdued. Acknowledge how the mind opens to a spacious equanimity as relief and release from suffering are known. Rightly understood, the Emptiness Deliverance from craving is known. Follow how awareness expands as personal insight to the Noble Truths Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind. A discerning wisdom distinguishes the Supreme Noble Truth, Nirvana as ‘the Destruction of Craving.’ As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

December 17—‘The Wonderful...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Marvelous, sublime and the ultimate fulfillment, the Four Noble Truths are a profound wisdom-deliverance—from suffering to suffering’s end. An unburdening and relief, self-associated hindrances eradicated, craving’s cessation gives way to the Ultimate Reality. This body/mind residue is the last manifestation before passing on to the Unconditioned Realm. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Wonderful.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. The Conditioned Realms reflect self, craving and suffering. The Four Noble Truths Proper Wisdom is wonderful, as liberation from self-promoted suffering is realized. As a wisdom recognition, the Four Noble Truths clarification is wonderful, amazing, marvelous and sublime discernment. Self-obsession ended and craving after ceasing, one resides in equanimity as fulfillment stands out. The Noble Truths wisdom experience shatters self-conceited misunderstanding. Joy and bliss, Nirvana is an unbinding triumph. Acknowledge the relief and release from suffering. Final peace and fulfillment, a sublime liberation is realized. Splendid and magnificent, the Ultimate Reality is penetrated. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 18—‘The Amazing...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

A Noble Truth clarification for the self-delusion, one isn't measured or defined by the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification. Astonishing, inspiring, miraculous and truly amazing, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind is known. Suffering ends and liberation is experienced firsthand. The Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path is fulfilled—conduct-virtue (controlling acted on transgressing habits), meditation-concentration (controlling actively arisen habits), and insight-wisdom (eradicating dormant habits). Wisely Reflecting, problems as answers, craving after is exorcised. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Amazing.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Awareness expands as personal insight; from self-preoccupied to a Noble Truths realization. Enlightenment and liberation as an amazing experience, release from self-obsession and suffering's ends is known. The Noble Truths insight recognition dislodges ignorance and wisdom deliverance is penetrated. The Ultimate Reality and the Unconditioned Realm stand out. Unshakeable, certain and undeniable, the Four Noble Truths distinguishing recognition along with the Middle Way Path are a remarkable experience. Stream Entry passage is fulfilled. A liberated joy, experience the final equanimity as relief and release from suffering to know ‘the amazing.’ As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath's quality and present mental state.

December 19—‘The Unailing...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

The Four Noble Truths highlight a self-promoted illness but also the Middle Way Path as cure. The breath’s quality reveals the stress and conflict of a body/mind self-friction, physical illness and mental instability. Everything pertaining and relating to the Sense, Fine-Material and Immaterial conditioned realms is a suffering or ailing. Applying the Middle Way Path as treatment, ‘the Unailing’ is known. There is true well-being, fulfillment and peace as self-attachments fall away and craving is brought to cessation. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Unailing.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Acknowledge the clarified mental well being as release from self-promoted actions. The final deluded hindrance, misunderstanding as ignorance is lifted. Acknowledge the settled and equanimous abiding. Self-inspired life and death scenarios aren’t generated and don’t play out. Having Proper Wisdom, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are overcome and released. The Middle Way Path followed to liberating cessation, one is healed and suffering free. Well being and at peace, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind is experienced. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 20—‘The Unailing State...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Removed from the one-sided self extremes, self-deluded fiction and the craved after upheaval of the Conditioned Realms, the self-inflicted wound closes and heals. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification beguiling illusion is dropped. Ignorance is clarified. This body/mind manifestation is the left over residue of past ignorant actions. Uncorrupted and unaffected, the Conditions Arising causes and effects purposeful action cycle is stopped and liberation is experienced. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Unailing State.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Through renunciation and restraint, one turns away from worldly desires, hatred and confusion. Going from sensory contacted upheaval to a settled Wise Reflection, craving’s compelling role is discerned. Realizing the Four Noble Truths wisdom recognition and the Middle Way Path fulfilled, wisdom deliverance is penetrated. Liberated, ‘the Unailing’ is experienced. Acknowledge the relief and release from self-obsession. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 21—‘Nirvana...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

A cooling down, a thirst quenched, or a fire gone out, Nirvana is a state removed from self-promoted conditioned actions and factors. Desire, hatred and confusion ceasing, known is a state without suffering. The Middle Way experience exorcizes craving, conceit, restlessness and misunderstanding. Not tied to the arising and falling of self-inspired conditioned states, the Supreme Noble Truth is penetrated. Released from ignorance, the Ultimate Reality is discerned. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘Nirvana.’

(“There is that dimension where there is neither earth, nor water, nor fire, nor wind; neither dimension of the infinitude of space, nor dimension of the infinitude of consciousness, nor dimension of nothingness, nor dimension of neither perception nor non-perception; neither this world, nor the next world, nor sun, nor moon...there is neither coming, nor going, nor stasis; neither passing away nor arising: without stance, without foundation, without support. This, just this, is the end of suffering.” UD 8.1).

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Acknowledge the relief, release and equanimity as freedom from self-delusion and craving. Cessation is known. A suffering-less state, unaffected, not created, not born or dying, the Supreme Noble Truth, Nirvana is experienced. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 22—‘The Unafflicted...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Harming, cruelty, hatred and oppression—self is suffering. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are a deception, an exaggeration and gross misunderstanding of life and reality. A warped sense of self-importance leads to sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. With the Noble Truths as clarifying wisdom, self-tormenting actions are unburdened and not an affliction. Eradicating desire, hatred and confusion, one turns away from self-affliction and suffering to the immaculate and uncorrupted—‘the Unafflicted.’

Self-inspired motives (desire, ill will and harming) led to craving and suffering. Discerned through Wise Intention, the affects of the subconscious mental dialogue are realized. As a Noble Truth recognition, discerned how these self-generated intentions follow a Conditions Arising causes and effects cycle. Beyond the mundane scope to crave (desire, self-identity or to escape), Nirvana is an unaffected realm. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Unafflicted.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Self is a delusion, insatiable, frantic, an exaggeration, and a craved after compromising. Closer to being out of control and insane, the Noble Truths clarification and Middle Way Path are the deliverance from self-consumed torment. Following renunciation and restraint, sense contacts and impressions are subdued (eyes/forms, ears/sounds, nose/scents, tongue/flavor, touch/tactile and mind consciousness/thoughts). Habits eradicated and craving cut off, the ‘unafflicted’ is known. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

December 23—‘Dispassion...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

First experienced as dispassion for sense contacts and worldly pursuits, dispassion matures as wisdom for a self-deceived obsession. As a body/mind identification, the six senses were an all-consuming reference point. Through a Noble Truth clarification and Middle Way appreciation, Wise Intention gave way to renunciation and restraint rather than desire, and Wise Effort went on to be applied as beneficial mental states. Wisely Reflecting, the subconscious mind is controlled and habit fetters are released, craving is brought to cessation, and an off base self-misunderstanding clarified. Wise Awareness and Wise Concentration joined as a focused and penetrating wisdom-liberating recognition. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘Dispassion.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. The dormant, active and transgressing subconscious flow of self-inspired habits are eradicated. Wisely Reflecting, control is exerted over thoughts to responsibly direct one’s intentions and actions. Now having Proper Wisdom and understanding life, renunciation and restraint naturally arise as one is no longer consumed or dominated by habitual tendencies. The Four Noble Truths clarification and Middle Way Path culminates as cessation and suffering’s end. Self is exorcised. The Ultimate Reality is realized. As a Noble Truth clarification, the self-ruse is penetrated and the Conditions Arising suffering cycle known. Following Stream Entry passage fulfillment, craving is cut off and dispassion follows to liberation. A fulfilled equanimity stands out. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 24—‘Purity...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Like unearthing a stone, the Noble Truths were applied as an active wisdom understanding life and reality. Specifically, the Middle Way Wise Understanding of the Four Noble Truths dug out to unearthed and recognize the self-impediment; Wise Intention wiped cleaned off the self-stone of its imperfections and impurities (desire, ill will and harming); Wise Speech, Wise Action and Wise Livelihood polished the self-stone; Wise Awareness, Wise Effort and Wise Concentration realized the many conditions, pressures, impulses and elements forging the self-stone impediment then to be released. The Middle Way Path fulfilled, one passed through the detoxification and purifying of the Noble Eightfold Path. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brought one to ‘Purity.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. From careless and impulsive to insightful and wisdom-clarified, realize how far you have come on this awakening journey. Purified, transformed and eradicated, one is released from the self-obsessed delusion. With craving cut off, conceit and restlessness naturally settled, acknowledge the transformation of the mind from self-deluded to purified. The Middle Way Path fulfillment is experienced and the Supreme Noble Truth realized. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 25—‘Freedom...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Unwittingly misunderstood and trapped by a false sense of security, everything in the three Conditioned Realms is impermanent, dissatisfying and subject to suffering, and of a non-self nature. The Four Noble Truths clarify reality. Compromised by craving (for desire, self-identity and to escape), the self actor is a burden and vexation.

Wisely Reflecting, the Four Noble Truths as Proper Wisdom: the First Truth Signless Deliverance for the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification; the Second Noble Truth Desireless Deliverance for craving’s role in suffering; the Third Truth Emptiness Deliverance for craving’s cessation; the Fourth Truth Middle Way appreciation leading to the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage has brought you to ‘Freedom.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Self-obsession and related extremes are an off base view and ignorance. Could this possibly have been me? Was I really that desiring, angry and confused person? I don’t recognize myself. Now that person is gone. With habitual domination and craving ended, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are dropped and suffering ended. As a liberating cessation without self-reference and self-promotion the misunderstanding blinders pulled away, liberation is experienced and the Unconditioned Realm is penetrated. Self-identified ignorance released and craving ceasing, ‘freedom’ is known. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 26—‘The Unadhesive...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Life’s constantly changing nature is experienced as an arising and fading as well as having the characteristics and qualities of being sticky, stretching in transformation, pulling apart, and fading. The wave-like affect passes as purposeful action. Self-reactions leave one reeling and tormented.

Unlike conditioned promoted states, the Ultimate Reality is ‘Unadhesive.’ Realized through the Noble Truths clarification, craving as the link to continued suffering is brought to cessation. The self-generated wave dies out, falls flat and motionless. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Unadhesive.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. The Four Noble Truths expose a self-hoax and the Middle Way is applied freeing attachments and the gross misunderstanding. Acknowledge how you have been attached to a self-ordeal and left exhausted from trying to fulfill a fantasy, but to always come up short, dissatisfied and to suffer. Now rightly understanding life and reality, one isn’t attached to any conditioned states and recognizes the Supreme Noble Truth as ‘the Unadhesive.’ As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 27—‘The Island...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Leaving behind worldly pursuits and crossing over to the further liberated shore, the Unconditioned Realm as an ‘island’ is known. The Four Noble Truths and Middle Way Path are applied like a raft crossing to the Ultimate Reality which stands apart from impermanent, self-promoted conditions.

Life, birth, death and suffering simply don’t apply and aren’t a true reflection of reality (but rather the many actions give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self). With no unique or individual self, there are only related causes and effects as purposeful action. The Unconditioned Realm isn’t connected to a self-promoted delusion.

Navigating through self-deluded, murky waters, one struggled to stay afloat. Wise Reflection kept you on the surface from being taken under by worldly transgressions and headed towards the ultimate goal of the Further Shore. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Island,’ liberation.

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Insight Meditation matures to Wise Reflection, Wise Reflection connects with the Four Noble Truths, and the Middle Way Path deliverance to ‘the Island.’ A place of refuge, seclusion, uncompromised and uncorrupted, the natural result of suffering’s end, the Ultimate Reality as an ‘island’ stands out apart from conditioned entanglements. Realized as a direct wisdom experience, discerned is the Unconditioned Realm. Finished with is this current body/mind manifestation to cross over to ‘the Island,’ Nirvana. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

December 28—‘The Shelter...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Self-obsession is an actual strangulation—seeking, desiring, plotting out as well as worrisome, fearful and doubting. Worldly experiences and interactions are dissatisfying. Self as undermining, craving brings leads to suffering. Nirvana on the other hand is a haven removed from self-tormented actions. A place of refuge experienced and connected through Wise Reflection, realized is self-identification’s release and craving’s cessation. Wisdom then is a personal experience as freedom from self-captivity. As a deliverance from suffering, craving for desire, self-identification and as an escape is stopped. Turning away from worldly pursuits, a distinguishing insight emerges. Life’s complexity is realized as impersonal, non-self and driven by purposeful action. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Shelter.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. The Four Noble Truths wisdom recognition is practically applied and the self-hoax ended. The Middle Way Path leads to ‘the Shelter’ as safety that is the Unconditioned Realm. With karmic habits cut off and misunderstanding clarified, true peaceful and equanimity is known. The Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification are released and craving brought to cessation. This is to be the last body/mind manifestation. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 29—‘The Asylum...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Craving’s cessation and the release from self-delusion, the Unconditioned Realm is a sanctuary. Freed from habitual impulses, Nirvana is the ultimate protection and refuge. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Asylum.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. A place of healing and true well being, with self-identification and associated attachments dropped and craving cut off, the ultimate refuge is realized. Beyond worldly distractions and pursuits, Nirvana as liberating cessation is known. Self-suffering ends. The Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind as misunderstanding done away with, the Ultimate Reality is penetrated. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 30—‘The Refuge...’ SN 43, 14 (3)*

Not an escape, denial or rejection but a true liberating experience, the Four Noble Truths wisdom clarification and the Middle Way are followed to the Unconditioned Realm sanctuary, Nirvana. The Conditioned Realms and in particular the Sense Realm is exposed as suffering. Worldly pursuits, communications and interactions are tied to a self-identified and promoted birth and death suffering cycle. Wholesome, healing, nurturing and a safe haven, a sanctuary, shelter and place of safety, the Middle Way fulfillment is an equanimous abiding and unconditional peace. The culmination of the Middle Way Path through Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Refuge.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. The Supreme Noble Truth recognition, the Middle Way Path follows to Nirvana as the ultimate ‘Refuge.’ Wisely Reflecting, the Noble Truth clarification takes one from a self-consumed suffering to the deliverance and safety of Nirvana. Acknowledge the relief and release from having dropped the burdensome self-baggage; the safety and shelter of the ultimate sanctuary is revealed and experienced. Now freed from self-promoted hindrances along with craving brought to cessation, the suffering cycle is stopped. The Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind brings one to true security. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.

December 31—‘The Unconditioned Realm’*

Nirvana is an unfabricated state without self-deception and craving. Not affected by impermanence and habitually produced actions, Nirvana is the Ultimate Reality. Over countless life times, you engaged in the self extremes for indulgence and gratification and hostility and aggression. Overwhelmed by sensory activity and accompanying actions, one responded carelessly, impulsively and unwisely to follow a self-related livelihood.

To know and experience the breakthrough to the Unconditioned Realm, the Middle Way threefold appreciation of conduct-virtue, meditation-concentration and insight-wisdom was applied and followed. Greed, hatred and confusion were exorcised and associated body/mind self-identified craving cut off. The culmination of Stream Entry passage brings one to ‘the Unconditioned Realm.’

Settled and equanimous, focused and discerning, as an Accomplished One wisdom is an active experience of the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Way Path fulfillment. Through the Noble Truths clarification and following the Middle Way Noble Eightfold Path, conduct-virtue reined in detrimental habits, meditation-concentration secured subconscious dormant habits, and insight-wisdom did away with active self-delusion. Eradicate were the final ten fetters to be free from misunderstanding or ignorance. As an Accomplished One you no longer relate to experiences as self but as a Proper Wisdom purposeful action (the many giving the illusion of the ‘one’). Having stepped through the self-amusing mirror reflection, self is extinct. The Noble Truth wisdom recognition discerns the Unconditioned. This body/mind residue is the final manifestation to then pass to the Unconditioned Realm, Nirvana. As an Accomplished One, the threefold misunderstanding is eradicated (the drive for desire and existence, driven by mistaking life as self).

This is peaceful, this is sublime, with worldly distractions dropped and dispassion for sensory activities, self-identification cools, craving is quenched, and associated conceit defused. One resides in the liberating equanimity of an Accomplished One. Without self-reference and self-promotion, suffering ends. The Four Noble Truths affirmed, the Unshakeable Deliverance of Mind realizes the Unconditioned Realm. Nirvana as liberating cessation is known in this very life.

*Begin all meditations with a body scan. Finding a comfortable sitting posture, allow the spine and back muscles to align then settle at the waist. Resting with hands cupped on your lap, go on to relax facial muscles, drop the shoulders while abdominal and pelvic muscles relax. Take 5-7 deep breaths through the nose to connect with the breath’s quality and present mental state.



*“Meditate, do not delay, or else you will regret it later. This is [my] instruction to you.”
MN 106.*