

Satipatthana: Sati: mindfulness or awareness Mindfulness: (closely observe, repeatedly look) at p 32
Patthana can be translated as: placing near or being present or attending.

So the translation can be:

How to have presence with mindfulness or how to be present with mindfulness or attending with awareness

(The word “foundation” came later from some commentaries. But these aren’t really the basis or foundations of all mindfulness. They are just those that the Buddha put together in this sutta. But they aren’t exclusively the only ways to go. (Anlayo, p 28)

4 categories of the Satipatthana Sutta: the Body, Feeling (Vedana: pleasure, pain, neutral-- bare feeling), Mind (emotions, lust anger, deluded, distracted) and Dhammas: Hindrances, Aggregates, Four Noble Truths -- frameworks or points of reference to be used during contemplation -- not necessarily the object of meditation)

Contemplation of the Body includes:

- awareness of breathing
- awareness of bodily postures
- clear knowing of bodily activities
- analysis of the body into its anatomical parts
- analysis of the body into its elementary qualities
- contemplation of a dead body in nine consecutive stages of decay.

It’s progressive. From observation to analysis. We skipped over postures and activities last week, so coming back. The postures and activities could even come even before breathing because they are basic.

It’s simple. And, awareness, not analysis.

Simplicity is a hallmark of this practice: just be aware. Simple attention. “If it’s not simple, it’s not vipassana.”

Pause: What do you notice about your posture right now? Take a moment to be aware of how you’re sitting. Where are your legs, your arms? Your chin, your chest -- up or down, in or out? Are you closed? Or open? Big, small? Relaxed? Tense?

Postures:

Instructions for contemplating the postures from the Sutta:

When walking, he knows “I am walking”; when standing, he knows “I am standing”; when sitting, he knows “I am sitting” when lying down, he knows “I am lying down”; or he knows accordingly however his body is disposed.

So, it’s the 4 postures, but really: any posture. What position is my body in right now? It could be: I am biking?

What’s the point?

For meditation:

Being present in the body as a beginning step in meditation...relax the body, feel the gravity... something we frequently do before even resting our attention on the breath.

You can meditate in any posture. It’s ok to not do sitting meditation -- just as legit.

To establish more mindfulness for meditation. It helps us establish continuity when on a retreat, right? We’ve all done this.

What about in daily life?

To check in. With the now. To be centered, present. Using the body as an anchor, a reminder. Just that awareness -- I’m standing or I’m sitting. Where do I feel it, what do I feel sitting here?

And an avenue out of the autopilot or thinking we might be caught up in...reviewing a conversation, practicing a talk, reviewing a discomforting feeling, planning all we are supposed to get done tomorrow, feeling inadequate about not exercising or flossing or calling our parents, judgments about our coworkers or listing reasons we are right and someone is wrong. **How about a break?** To just be here and notice what it feels like to stand or sit.

It's simple -- maybe too simple? Gil Fronsdal: "I'm an important person who has important thoughts. This noticing I'm standing isn't up to my PhD at Stanford."

Can we do it while we are waiting? What is waiting? How do we wait? Could we instead notice our posture?(Discussion Question on this later.)

Take it a step further: Investigate the How of sitting or standing

Can you find pleasure in how you're sitting -- It can keep the mind interested and motivated

Examples (We did on Jill Shepherd retreat)

Can show you something about your mind state. There's interconnection. Me: lying in bed after waking at 4:30, tossing and turning, I remembered to be mindful of my posture and found myself-- splayed out not in a way I could fall asleep -- I was mentally restless and it was reflected in my body. The awareness prompted a change in position to one that was more relaxed and conducive to falling asleep and helped me do that.

(Falling asleep with awareness can improve quality of sleep, prevent bad dreams. The recommended best position is on the right side.)

Let's stand up and make some postures: Be Skeptical: what do you notice? How does it feel in your body?

Now stand like you're frustrated or annoyed.

Now relaxed/content.

How do they each feel in your body? What do you notice?

So, we can change it if necessary to also impact our mind state.

Smile: even if you don't want to smile, even if you have to put a pencil in your teeth to force a smile -- it sends a message to your brain to be more happy. We smile because we are experiencing happiness and if we smile, we can change our mindstate to that: it works both directions.

The victory pose can make us feel more powerful. (Amy Cuddy's Ted Talk : a social psychologist who teaches at a business school.)

VIDEO : The Marshmallow Test

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX_oy9614HQ

Kids are offered a marshmallow but told if they wait and don't eat it while left in a room alone with it sitting on a chair with the marshmallow on the table in front of them, they'll get a second one.

1. Shows humans waiting and some of what we do when we wait.
2. Postures, body shows the kids' mind states

Jean sent me this article. They did an adult version of the marshmallow test with money rewards and measured the telomeres: the protective caps on the end of chromosomes which prevent damage to DNA -- deteriorate with age. (Like the caps on shoelaces. Prevents DNA from fraying)

People who don't do well waiting or delaying gratification age more rapidly -- or do they have shorter telomeres

There's a future plan to do a study with mindfulness and see if this helps preserve the telomeres longer and resist ageing.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/12168827/Impatient-people-may-be-ageing-faster-scientists-suspect.html>

Next: clear knowing (sampajana) of Activities: (Read with "she" instead of "he.")

When going forward and returning he acts clearly knowing; when looking ahead and looking away he acts clearly knowing; when flexing and extending his limbs he acts clearly knowing; when wearing his robes and carrying his outer robe and bowl he acts clearly knowing; when eating, drinking, consuming food, and tasting he acts clearly knowing; when defecating and urinating he acts clearly knowing; when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking, and keeping silent he acts clearly knowing.

Maybe we can add some things: when searching the internet, she searches clearly knowing, when texting, when driving, she acts with clear knowing. So...again can be a form of meditation or a break from our ruminating thinking self. And, it can be a pleasure.

How does it become a form of meditation? Q at Sayadaw U Tejane's talk I attended. A guy said, some days I don't feel like sitting and instead say, I'll be mindful all day. Is that OK? SUT answered: So, how did that work for you? (Implying, it probably didn't and the guy admitted it didn't. He said it's easier, esp when you're a beginner to sit and have fewer distractions. But, yes, ideally, anything can be a meditation.) What supports our meditation in activities. For me: having a clear intention. And, a time limit. Like: I'll hike uphill mindfully but on the way back, I don't have to.

What is meant by clear knowing?

According to Analayo the Sutta doesn't say, but in other commentaries it's described as

- the purpose
- the suitability
- the "pasture"
- non-delusion

Explanation:

Purpose: is speech in line with the path?

Suitability: is it careful and dignified as a monk or nun should live?
For me: those mean: am I acting in line with my values?

Pasture: involves some sense restraint -- are you in the right pasture, field. So, maybe not going into the "field" where you'll be distracted -- like in a room alone with a marshmallow you're trying not to eat. But also: restraining yourself from sensual distractions (not picking the marshmallow up to smell it, for instance).

Non-delusion: Getting out of your sense of self in doing it and seeing the impermanence in the activity

So we are asked to be mindful: Bare awareness but also clear knowing: restrained and dignified behavior.

The deal is: if you're aware of what you're doing, you'll probably make some other decisions -- some better decisions. If you're really aware, it's kind of hard to smoke a cigarette if you're trying to be mindful of what your body is doing. Maybe you won't take a cookie when you're not hungry if you're clearly knowing that you're reaching out for one and you already enjoyed two.

Quotes on how mindfulness:

"Just as a heavy stone ball can penetrate a mound of wet clay, or just as fire can be produced from dry wood, or just as an empty jug can be filled with water, so too will Mara find an opportunity to overpower those who are not well established in mindfulness of the body. But just as a light ball of string cannot penetrate a door panel made of heartwood, or just as fire cannot be produced from wet wood, or just as a full jug cannot take more water, so too will Mara be unable to overpower those who develop and cultivate mindfulness of the body." From Kayagatasati Sutta (Anlayo, p 123)

If we are really present, aware, there's not room for worry, for thoughts that drag us down.

Contemplation of the body imagery: Like a man with a full bowl of oil on his head walking through a crowd watching a beautiful woman dancing and singing with a man following him who has a sword and his ready to cut his head off if he spills a drop.

Don't half ass something -- whole ass something Louie CK

Be fully present, appreciate the present.

Discussion Questions:

Reflect on waiting: What does it mean to wait? It's a verb, an action -- or is it? Think of a time recently that you had to wait: (like for an event to start, in line somewhere, for a friend to arrive, for the kids to come out of school, for a meeting to be over). How did you wait? What did you do? what did you feel? What would it be like to bring some mindfulness of posture into a waiting period?

Have you practiced with daily activities as a meditative practice? What activities? How did/does that work for you? Did you have trouble keeping your mind on the task at hand? What might help support your presence of mindfulness as you do the activity?

What other activities might you attend to with awareness? How could you bring interest or enjoyment to the process?

Definition of Wait:

to stay where one is or delay action until a particular time or until something else happens.

Synonyms: hold on, hold back, bide one's time, hang fire, mark time, stand by, sit tight, hold one's horses

Link and Resources related to our discussion tonight on body postures and activities:

- The Marshmallow Test
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX_oy9614HQ
- The link between ageing/DNA breakdown and impatience
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/12168827/Impatient-people-may-be-ageing-faster-scientists-suspect.html>
- Amy Cuddy's TED talk "Your Body Language Shapes Who You Are" (Power poses):
https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are?language=en
- Gil Fronsdal's talk on postures and activities: Gil Fronsdal: Four Foundations of Mindfulness: Mindfulness of Body 41:19 Recorded: Monday, January 25, 2016 Here's a link to the stream:
http://www.audiodharma.org/talks/audio_player/6341.html
- Book: *Satipatthana: The Direct Path to Realization* by Analayo