



## **DANGEROUS THINGS THAT RUIN THE HEART**

By

**Luang Ta Maha Boowa**

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## **Dedication**

*This series of translations is dedicated to Jane Browne. Jane is a long time follower of Luang Ta Maha Bcewa and Ajahn Pannavaddhe. It was through her assistance that I was able ordain in Thailand many years ago. I hope that these translations go some way to showing my gratitude.*

## ***Translator's Introduction***

This series of translations is based on talks given by Lunga Ta Maha Boowa over a number of years. These talks were recorded and then transcribed into Thai script and it was from a combination of this script and the original recordings that these translations were made.

All the talks were selected by Ajahn Martin Piyadhammo, Wat Pa Baan Taad, and I am extremely grateful and honoured that he asked me complete this work.

In this series of translations I have attempted to not only convey the meaning of Luang Ta Maha Boowa's words but also the manner in which the words were spoken. In other words, I have attempted to give the reader some insight into Luang Ta's personality. I'd like to think that, if he were able to speak English, these would have been the words he would have used. As such, this is not scholarly work with perfect English but a pure transcription of the oral expression used to convey the Dhamma.

Many Thai words have their origin in the Pali language but, over time, the meaning has deviated from or increased upon the original. In this text original Pali words have mostly been retained and a Glossary for these terms has been provided. Where the meaning of a word in context is more closely aligned with the Thai meaning, the word has been translated into English.

In some cases, to maintain an easy reading flow, Pali words have been anglicized into the plural where no such plural word exists in the Pali. For example, the Pali word Khandha meaning "aggregate" sometimes appears as Khandhas. In some cases the Pali can be singular or plural, depending on context.

All words in parenthesis ( ) have been added by the translator in order to help clarify the meaning.

All footnotes have been added by the translator.

Finally, I would like to thank those who have assisted me with this translation: Khun Miskaman Rujavichai who checked my translation and provided additional insight into Luang Ta's idioms and idiosyncrasies and my wife Susan who provided the proof reading service.

With Metta

Steven Towler

# **A Dhamma Desana (talk) for Training Monks at Wat Pa Barn Tard**

23 July Buddhist Era 2537 (1994)

## **DANGEROUS THINGS THAT RUIN THE HEART**

Speaking about the teachings of the Lord Buddha, they're complete and stand the test of time; just like a river and the ocean that are always just right. However, there are many, many things that represent a danger or are enemies of this river. There are things that will make the water murky and overgrown (with weeds). These make it unsuitable for bathing or drinking and difficult to use or get clean. Throughout the land you'll find things that can ruin clean water and change it into dirty water.

The Dhamma of the Lord Buddha is just the same as this. Lokadhātu is full to the brim of things about which the Dhamma has no deficiencies. What this means is that this Dhamma is the true basis of natural phenomena. It also means that the Dhamma which is the behaviour associated with what the Lord Buddha advised and taught is perfect and replete with reason and logic. However, everywhere, internally and externally, in the towns and villages both near and far, there are things that are enemies of Dhamma which dilapidate it. These things are commonplace. With them come the things that will taint the religion or will sully it and these will always fulfil their function.

It's for this reason that results in Dhamma that practitioners would like to appear seldom do. It's also because amongst those practitioners themselves there are people who seek and who accumulate things that are grubby and dirty and mix them with the Dhamma i.e., their practice. They let things that are muddy and mucky dominate what's inside them. Samādhi, which is the stillness of heart that brings about calm, is thus prevented from happening. In the case of Paññā, there's no landing any short, sharp blows. This is all because of these grubby, disorderly things mixing in exasperation and ruination. Not only that, this isn't limited to any single person or party; especially not to we Buddhists.

Narrowing this down to those who practise, they are not exempt from ruining themselves by vigorously seeking out and adopting these things that are dirty and grubby; that make the seat of Dhamma in the hearts' of these practitioners murky through various Ārammana.

In terms of visible objects, there's no limit to them, starting with those things that are harmful to the Dhamma in the heart. Sounds, there's no limit to them either. Smells, tastes and tactile objects, these things are same as mud. They flow inwards and keep mixing in until they get their way. They make the Citta murky, all the time.

If you were after Samādhi, well, these things have scoffed it completely. If you were making inquiries about Paññā, again, they've gobbled up the lot. If you were interested in freedom, Vimutti, well that's even further away from happening. This is all because these harmful things have completely blended in. The religion therefore has taken hits from the various forms of Kilesas and Tanhā which fill beings and people by being swallowed in. This

continues until it manifests as external behaviour; something that is pitiful and saddening. There's a lot of it about these days.

The more educated we are the more we accumulate unsavoury things and, to the same extent, these things<sup>1</sup> get into (our hearts') and become mingled up with them. In the end, it doesn't matter whether someone's well educated or not, if they pledge themselves to be a Buddhist who will respect the Buddhist religion, they all end up with the same qualities. In the end, you won't know who is superior to whom in their quest for Dhamma. Nor will you know who, within themselves, is chasing after the Kilesas.

I call on all serious practitioners to ponder on this.

We are monks who are serious practitioners. Don't go looking for these sensory objects that I have been speaking about. These objects are harmful to the heart at any time of the day or night. The Dhamma of the Lord Buddha proclaims the ill-effects of these things regularly coming in contact with His teachings. They never miss a beat. They're still a danger to sentient beings and, while they're still around, they always will be.

It's because we seek out these things under the influence of belief in base instincts that the heart is energised without us even knowing what's going on.

Instead of delivering benefits, the practice of Dhamma just brings about hardship within us. Then, when we do enquire about the religion, we have no idea what it is or where it can be found. This is because (in our hearts') there's nothing but these (sensory objects) that have entirely blended in. What is phony has now transformed into what is real and it completely possesses the Citta's of those Dhamma practitioners. The Dhamma therefore seldom makes an appearance in the hearts' (of these people). This is something that is very worrying.

I would like all of you to give this some serious consideration.

As for me, I'm getting older by the day. As I do, I'm getting more and more concerned about my fellow practitioners because they will lack direction. There'll only be these (harmful) things entering and mixing in their Citta. The likes of Magga, Phala, Samādhi and Paññā will hardly ever occur; they don't even occur now. The practice of Dhamma is simply going through the motions.

Walking Caṅkama is just moving backwards and forwards; just going through the motions. However, the Kilesas get in and get to work in that work cycle without us even knowing it. This happens more often than diligent effort does. That only shows itself in small doses.

Talk about sitting in meditation (Samādhi), that's no different. The work pattern of working with Samādhi is just one of accumulating sense objects (Ārammana). It's reeling in this sense object and that sense object, of which there are plenty, but they are the enemies of stillness and calmness in the heart. Consequently, Samādhi is not to be found. No matter how much meditation gets done, all that's attained are these Ārammana which are thought about, brooded over, dreamed of and imagined inside oneself. That's the way it is.

These things are all there since being the images of the Kilesas work.

This is something really worthy of regret.

Practitioners who still regret missing out on these Ārammana will have their progress curbed. Every Buddha that there has ever been has gone to the nth degree to point out that these Ārammana are one hundred percent harmful.

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<sup>1</sup> Clearly this does not mean that the actual physical objects get into the heart but rather our perception of them.

Just consider visible objects; what visible objects are there that are not a danger? Because the heart delights in the lot. Whichever visible objects the heart likes, those objects are a danger; they're a danger to the heart. Not only that but the visible objects that are seen as the most harmful are the ones that the Citta likes and loves the most. The visible objects that the Lord Buddha most condemned as being dangerous to the heart and to Dhamma are the ones that practitioners such as ourselves like more than the others. As a result, no matter how many there are, these visible objects can be grouped together and the whole lot are a danger to the heart. This being the case, where can you turn to that will be peaceful and calm?

The same is true of sounds. There's no limit to the amount of sounds there are. However, the Citta is not too fond of normal sounds. On the other hand, it takes delight in the sounds that are a danger to Dhamma and a danger to itself. See what I mean? No matter how many there are, we reel them all in to roast the heart inside us.

The same is true of smells, tastes and tactile objects.

Any of these things that are no danger to the heart, it doesn't like.

It puts these objects down in the one spot<sup>2</sup>. It thinks about them in that one spot. It accumulates them in that one spot. It pays attention to that one spot. If these sounds, smells, tastes and tactile objects are the types that are harmful to the heart, as defined by the core principles of Dhamma, the heart is likely to be fond of these. This is because the Kilesas force it to like them.

I would like all of you to remember this.

We ourselves aim for the Dhamma together. We've set ourselves to seek out the Dhamma. We haven't set ourselves to seek out sights, sounds, smells, tastes and tactile objects which are harmful things. This being the case, how come our Cittas' are in such harmony with these dangers that the two are indistinguishable, and all without us ever having a clue about what's going on? This happens to the extent that, even if the Dhamma that we have been aiming and wishing for with all our might were to come in stages, it would have little flavour in our Cittas'. This is because our Cittas' have been gobbled by these dangers.

Practising Dhamma is difficult because the Kilesas have an especially strong flavour that deceives worldlings and morally bankrupts them faster than the Dhamma can intercede. When you first start, there's nothing but these things working away.

We have every kind of organ ready to receive these objects that are a danger to us. In the case of visible objects, we've got eyes. Sounds, we've got ears. These are mechanisms for receiving these dangerous things; mechanisms for welcoming these things in to burn us. How does smell fit into this? We have a nose. Taste. We have a tongue. Hot and cold; hard and soft, we have our body that is familiar with these sensations. When you put all these together, the heart of someone who samples these contacts is full to the brim with them. What we're waiting for is an understanding of these things; we're missing the realization that we are attached to and have our minds' set on these things. This is why they are full of danger.

This is what I mean when I say that practising Dhamma is difficult. It's because these harmful things are in harmony with (the heart) that they are very difficult to separate out so that what is dangerous and what is meritorious can be understood. In the end, the heart is full of nothing but danger. Practitioners, therefore, often don't know much about what's going on.

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<sup>2</sup> Literally: "that spot" or "that point"

As I age, the more concerned I become about my fellow practitioners. Things that jeopardize the Dhamma are on the increase each day. Not only that, we are content with this. We've got the Kilesas making us satisfied. The part played by Dhamma in making us content is very small. You think about it for the odd moment here and the odd moment there but apart from that there are just the Kilesas working away on the heart.

The religion, which is complete, can be compared to the waters of the ocean if you like, however, it's not free from being mixed together with these things that are grubby and dirty. Consequently, it doesn't appear to be pure water nor does the purity of Samādhi and Paññā that is appropriate to one's status appear. This is all because we're stirred up by these grubby things that have blended in.

But, you know, in the matter of Dhamma, you can't find any limitations. Moderate and profound levels of Dhamma are always to be found. However, those who would rise to the challenge of breaking the obstacles that I have mentioned, which are full of danger; those with the guts to take up the Dhamma with strident endeavour; they have little or no energy to do so. All the stupidity and ignorance diminishes Paññā so that it can't keep up with the Kilesas, which are clever and as sharp as a tack in our hearts'. This makes it very difficult to practise.

It is for this very reason that those who practise must be deadly serious in what they do. They have to behave as if this world wasn't here. Their eyes have to behave as if there is nothing to see. Their ears have to behave like there is nothing to listen to. The same applies to the nose, tongue and body; they have to behave as if nothing is making contact with them.

They should observe the contact between the Citta and the Ārammana that comes in contact with some aspect of Dhamma<sup>3</sup>; allowing the Citta to "know" by having Sati stationed at that spot. Now then, this is when you'll start to see the peculiarities and the strangeness of the Citta that has Sati paying attention to what's going on.

You have to be steadfast and committed!

When killing off the Kilesas you can't pretend to kill them. Kilesas are exceptionally sharp. They are things that have extreme power. If this were not the case, they wouldn't have been able to dominate the hearts' of the sentient beings that dwell in Lokadhātu's spheres of existence and continue to dominate them. It's because they're so smart that they have clever means of deception on many fronts.

Kilesas have gross means of deception that fool beings into becoming attached to them. They have moderate means of deception that fool beings into becoming attached to them. They have even more means of deception at the subtle level that are very refined and cunning at making beings attached to them. They're all tarred with the same brush.

It's because of all this that sentient beings are not interested in breaking out of the Kilesas web of deception to go off and take up the purity of Buddho, which is Dhamma gold. This is the reason why.

Those who practice must make Sati as solid as a rock. Don't let it drop off at any time or any place. A Citta without Sati, that simply experiences, is like a madman. Just see for yourself. No Sati is madness, one hundred percent. No Sati at all is one hundred percent madness; just as we see on the roads and highways. This kind of Sati is normal for those who have Kilesas.

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<sup>3</sup> At the time the practitioner may view this contact as impermanent, or suffering or not-self etc, and so the "aspect of Dhamma" may vary according to practitioner's mode of practice.

This isn't the normal Sati of those who have Dhamma. The normal Sati of those who have Kilesas will naturally experience things entirely in accordance with the story of the Kilesas.

If it was the Sati of someone who had Dhamma, it would be consistently aware of what was going on. It would be constantly aware of anything that came in contact (with the senses). It would then attempt to improve and modify the situation at all times. It would be continually careful and vigilant. This is how the Sati of someone who has Dhamma differs from those who don't.

You must be a person who has the Sati of someone who has Dhamma. It will take good care of you. If that wasn't the case, there would be no way to look after you. The Kilesas would engulf everything. It would be like all the water in the ocean turning into mud. No matter how wide or how deep the ocean may be it would not be free from the dirt and grime that are persistently being mixed in.

Even though the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha is much wider and much deeper than the ocean, disingenuous things that accompany the Dhamma and are its enemies are constantly getting mixed in with it. It doesn't matter how extensive it is, the Kilesas can stretch to the outer limits. If there was no Dhamma that was superior to the Kilesas, this is how things would always be.

So, you must establish Sati and establish it well. You must be determined.

These eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body that we have, we've got to make like they are not there. Don't be sorry that you've missed out on using these things; that doesn't do any good. Don't have any regrets about what you could hear. Don't feel sorry about missing out on any (sensory) contact. There's no need to because these things have been with us from birth right up to the present. You've been using these eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body since the day you were born and what use have they been? All that's happened is the Kilesas have had their use of them and how has that done any good?

When you look at something, it's on behalf of the Kilesas. When you listen to something, you do so for the sake of the Kilesas. Smell, for the Kilesas. Taste, for the Kilesas. All of this stuff, it's all for the Kilesas! It's not for Dhamma. Because of this there is no such thing as them being diluted.

The more sustenance the Kilesas have, the more their intensity increases. Their increasing strength continually makes people deluded. These deluded people are non-other than us. We are the deluded ones. The story of other people is our story also. However, we who practise and are deluded feel we are atypical from their world. In the world where they don't practise their delusion is different. We deluded practitioners go beyond cause and beyond effect and exceed the limits. For this reason I ask all of you to be really determined.

In regard to the religion of the Lord Buddha, don't go looking elsewhere. We should watch our own hearts'. That's what we should be doing. The water of the ocean is the water of the ocean. There's only the heart that can understand the water of Dhamma, whatever its qualities. Nothing else can understand it. It's because of this that the Lord Buddha said that Dhamma was born with the heart. The heart has Dhamma. That is to say, the heart is the sage, the sage that will scrutinize and will come in contact with all Dhamma that arises with the individual. There's no other way of knowing. Because of this we must spruce up our hearts' and make sure they enter a system capable of knowing and understanding all aspects of Dhamma.

As an example, let's talk about Samādhi. The way it is in your textbooks indicates that it appears in the heart of a practitioner. So why hasn't the heart got Samādhi? If there's no Sati

looking after the Citta, there can't be any Samādhi. For the Citta to have Samādhi it must be firmly locked onto a single object, such as Buddho. It doesn't matter which Parikamma it is, you must cling to it like a limpet clinging to a rock. You have to have Sati forcing the adhesion and preventing any separation.

This is what it means for the Citta to be bonded to Dhamma. That Dhamma will then have a connection or, (the two) will continue together progressively. The power of the Dhamma will become apparent as a Citta that, by degrees, becomes firm and steadfast. Because of this continuation through having Sati, Samādhi can happen. It can happen if the Citta has continuity in this way.

As I have said previously and consistently, when you're in a scary location, prevent the Citta from going off and thinking about that which you fear, such as a tiger. The more afraid you are, the more you should turn your attention into the Citta; let it grasp this. For example, if the heart is at the level of Buddho, seize hold of Buddho until your attachment is solid. Live or die, you'll sacrifice everything. Refuse to let the Citta go off and think about the danger, such as a tiger. The Citta should think only of Buddho. It should be clinging firmly to this.

Now, when Buddho has come in contact with the heart, by means of carrying on from this and never letting go, results will happen. Results will build up and (the Citta) will go from strength to strength until it's rock solid. Now, the time for thinking about tigers has gone. The time for thinking about anything has gone.

When the energy of Dhamma and the energy of heart come together, there's a lot of power. The Citta being in Samādhi is the same thing. The Citta being in Samādhi is the Citta being resolutely still. It's the energy of the heart. It steadily increases until there's strength and stability and this has to come from establishing Sati in a firm way; by not letting (the Citta and Sati) come apart. This is what it takes. This person is one who will get to appreciate Samādhi for sure.

If Sati is established in a disorderly way and, at some time, you can think, your thoughts will be worldly in keeping with Samsāra. This will let the Kilesas and Tanhā punch hard all day. They will keep jabbing at Buddho, Dhammo, Sangho and you won't get a single second with them. From that point on, the Kilesas will punch away in this manner and, right up to the day you die, Samādhi won't appear in your heart.

So, remember this lesson well. If you want to be able to appreciate Samādhi, you must practise its cause in the way that I have mentioned. You won't go astray; you'll definitely come to experience it.

I have explained various tricks of the trade and techniques before, such as, avoiding lying down, reducing food intake and fasting. These are one type of approach. That is to say they are supports that improve the ease at which we can put in effort.

Diligent effort has a hard time of it when it has some support<sup>4</sup>. On the Kilesas side, there are lots of them and so diligent effort tends to be inconvenient. Because of this we cut out the things that support the tapering off of the Kilesas. For example, avoiding lying down is done in order to cause discomfort to the body so what will happen to you? If you don't do this full on, the Kilesas will turn it to their advantage completely. You must let there be no sleep and no lying down.

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<sup>4</sup> Initially, the harder you fight the harder the Kilesa fight back, therefore, resolute determination is essential when using these techniques. Perseverance is rewarded eventually by way of a reduction in the Kilesas.

Moving on from there, there's reducing your food intake. When you reduce your food intake, you have little physical energy. This can be seen as reducing the power of the Kilesas that they need to stride forward. It's inconvenient for the tools of the Kilesas. It's more convenient for the path of Dhamma. The Dhamma can thus progress.

Fasting is exactly the same.

These methods of physical discomfort are various ways of curbing the Kilesas which reduce their power in order for Dhamma to make progress. That's what it's all about. I want you all to remember this well.

In just the same way, establishing the Citta in Samādhi is something that involves not an inconsiderable amount of difficulty. When you've achieved Samādhi and you set off in pursuit of Paññā, assuming that you can pull yourself away, you pull yourself away from stillness. You don't pull yourself away from the blazing fire. And it is dragging yourself away from the stillness because you believe it to be calmness and contentment. You don't want to be off doing some work so you have to push and pull yourself to go off and investigate things like Dhātu, Khandha, **Aniccāṃ Dukkhāṃ Anattā** and Asubha in your body and in the bodies of others in every land throughout the world.

Take these (bodies) and scrutinize them, compare them side by side or see them as composed of parts after which the Citta will have some ingenuity. Distinguish between this part and that part. As you go further in the sharper the definition becomes. This is because the knowledge gained from Paññā is much, much different from the knowledge gained from Samādhi. They are different by degrees.

The first stage of Paññā feels strange compared to stages of Samādhi. As it becomes more meticulous, this Paññā quite naturally clears away ignorance and foolishness. It's as if a cloud conceals an expanse of sky. When the cloud scatters, you will naturally be able to see that expanse of sky more easily. This is comparable to the various Ārammana; they cloak the inside of the Citta. When Paññā penetrates right through them, the brightness of the light is inclined to shine through. Now, this is Paññā!

Wherever our Paññā searches, if it searches the heart according to the extensive range of methods that the Lord Buddha taught, it won't go wrong.

There are forty nifty tricks in the methods that bring about peacefulness, as I've explained previously. Whichever one of these, from whatever passage of the Dhamma, is right for your character take that one in order to obtain peacefulness. Later on, these things, even if they're the objects of Samatha, will change into Ārammana of Paññā when Paññā strides out. Without doubt, they become the work for Paññā.

When we refer to Asubha, we are referring to this body. Have your examination penetrate this and see clearly the reality of this body then dissect it. Paññā will advance.

When Paññā is advanced, the gloriously bright light of the Citta will gradually fan out. There's no end to this either. There is no limit to Paññā. Right up to Vimutti, freedom; when you get there. When we talk about an end, there is an end to which the Kilesas can't reach. This is what the end is. However, as far as Paññā on its own goes, there is no limit, no end. Whatever it comes in contact with it, it will always be aware of; even though the Kilesas are gone and the battle is over. This is just Paññā performing its function.

The only difference is it's not called Magga. This is because Magga is the way to overcome the Kilesas; it's a tool to defeat the Kilesas. When the Kilesas have been exterminated, it's not longer referred to as Magga. It is the asset of Citta-vimutti which can be used against the

world, against Saṃsāra. When it's necessary, it can be put into use. When it's no longer necessary, it switches off by itself in accordance with its fundamental nature.

Where does the Dhamma that I have spoken about reside? It resides in those who practise. We shouldn't look to our environment. We shouldn't look to the scriptures. Don't believe those who study are the ones who have good qualities. This (Dhamma) doesn't depend on how much you've studied. It doesn't depend on your environment. Instead it depends on those who have all the aspects of Dhamma that they have heard about or have learnt enter into their hearts'. It depends on them putting what they've heard and learnt into practise; allowing results to appear in the heart; having Samādhi arise; having Paññā arise; and finally, having Vimutti arise inside the Citta. It's this that (the Dhamma) depends on, contrary to any other beliefs. It doesn't just happen.

Study, anyone who studies knows something. A child studying knows something. An adult studying knows something. Women studying, men studying, they all know something. It doesn't even matter whether or not this is Dhamma or worldly study. This is because study allows you to know things but it's just memorized, that's all. If you don't put it into practise yourself and put meat on the bones, then nothing of substance can occur.

This is like having a plan or a blueprint. You can make it as detailed as you like, full of rooms and dividers, but it's no use as a house or a building or a shop because it hasn't be put into practise. If it's put into practise, well then, it can have as many storeys as you like.

(The Dhamma) is exactly the same. The Pariyatti component is what we have studied. Learning about Samādhi, what's that all about? The Lord Buddha taught the technique for this then He guided the practice in accordance with what was being learnt. Making strides forward with Paññā, how do you stride forward? Investigate as he taught and in the way He advised and realization will occur. This is the Paṭipatti component. The Lord Buddha therefore referred to Pariyatti as the learning done in order to have a compass to point the way. Paṭipatti then, is doing the work according to what has been learnt.

Paṭivedha or Paṭivedha Dhamma is knowing thoroughly, by degrees, until Vimutti, freedom, is reached. It's called having penetrating insight all the time. This is what is defined as Paṭivedha Dhamma, having ceaseless penetrating insight. This is not over and above these three items of Dhamma because they are all interrelated.

These three items Dhamma are contained within the fabric of the religion. They can't be separated out. If anyone were to separate out learning as one thing and practice as another so that they didn't work in harmony, then this would mean the religion would be lacking Magga, lacking Phala and lacking structure. The religion would be without balance. It wouldn't be the complete and balanced religion that was taught by the Lord Buddha.

If you want the religion to be complete, there has to be learning and what is learnt has to be put into practise. The practice will give rise to results and thus penetrating insight will occur by degrees. So, this is it, the religion that upholds Magga and upholds Phala is maintained by those who have all three elements of Dhamma interacting with each other.

In the beginning there are two kinds, Pariyatti with Paṭipatti are the first. When it's reasonable for results to occur based on what has been known and understood, they will occur naturally, on their own and continually. This will continue to happen until Vimutti, freedom, is reached. Release happens in this heart. It doesn't happen anywhere else.

What do all of us think when we look at the religion these days? We've been practising for a long time now. We've been ordained for a long time already. I would very much like to ask what we see as the problems with the religion. The world gets excited and is crazy about the

Kilesas and Tanhā. It goes for them in a big way to the extent that there is no let up from the Kilesas. These days, the whole world is mad about them. We still don't realize this, or to what extent the Kilesas can deceive people.

The Dhamma, something which is infinitely splendid, can't in any way be compared to the Kilesas. So, how come no one's interested? It's because the flavour of the Kilesas dominates everything.

It's as if the fresh water in a massive waterhole, that's both deep and wide, has come in contact with duckweed<sup>5</sup> which has spread a thin film across the surface. Anyone taking a look, from any direction, would see only the duckweed on top of the water. They wouldn't see the water which is beneath the duckweed. Because of this the duckweed is the most prominent feature of that waterhole. There is nothing more outstanding than the duckweed that carpets the water.

It's as if this is what it is like. The Dhamma of the Lord Buddha fills the waterhole. It fills the heart of the world, or even the whole of Lokadhātu, but the power of greed, hatred, delusion and Rāga Tanhā, which can be compared to the duckweed, carpets and covers it completely; in every single heart.

When you're out swaggering about, all you see is the duckweed or the Kilesas. You notice visible objects, sounds, smells, tastes and tactile objects. You reckon these are as splendid and precious as you can get. The Dhamma that will fix the problems of these things is something you fail to see. The entire waterhole is of no significance at all. All there is is duckweed.

The Dhamma of the Lord Buddha is exactly the same, no matter how profound and splendid it may be, it ceases to have significance because of the duckweed that is, the various types of Kilesa and Tanhā. They envelop everything. They prevent us from seeing the marvel of the Dhamma. All they let us see is the duckweed which is the full range of Kilesas. Consequently, the religion has become nothing but duckweed; in keeping with being swallowed up by the Kilesas. So what is it going to be like in the future?

These days, who is going to study more than those who are dedicated to the monkhood studying the Dhamma? But they don't study just the Dhamma, they also study worldly subjects. They've incorporated the way of the world. They have introduced it and increasingly mix it in with Dhamma. So much so, there is nothing left of Dhamma these days.

The more they learn the more the Kilesas and Rāga Tanhā they have. The more ambitious they become. They study for the sake of the Kilesas not for the sake of the Dhamma.

If you're going to study for the sake of Dhamma, don't introduce Kilesa subjects and mix them in with the Dhamma, so it's then swallowed up. When you've studied, you must practise following the core principles of Dhamma as laid down by the Lord Buddha. Look at these other things that the Lord Buddha said were harmful and see them as being harmful, just like He said. Then, eliminate them by being vigilant and careful and by any path at your disposal. These things will then gradually become eradicated from the Citta. The Citta will then slowly become clearer, allowing something marvellous to appear.

It's here that you've seen the water. When the duckweed is removed, when the duckweed is lifted from the water, the water will naturally continue to emerge.

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<sup>5</sup> Duckweed has been used as the translation as this is more likely to be known by English speaking persons than the actual plant with a similar nature that occurs in Thailand.

Whichever way the duckweed is broken up and removed, it's through a method of practising Dhamma. The practice of Dhamma is therefore the removal of the duckweed from the water. It allows us to see the water with clarity. The more you practise, the more you will break up and remove the duckweed until you've got rid of the lot from the entire waterhole. Then what will things be like? Wherever you look it will be brilliant white and only water. You can drink from or bath in any part of it, whichever way you like, with complete ease and convenience.

When the Citta is a complete all-rounder, this is what it's like. The Citta that is a complete all-rounder is like the water that's been opened up in the waterhole. There's nothing that cloaks or covers it either. When the heart is fully opened up, it's Magga Phala Nibbāna. This is what's in that heart.

This, this is the Buddha most excellent. This is how He is magnificent. The Sangha of Sāvakas is most excellent and this is how they are so magnificent.

They didn't become magnificent because of the duckweed that the rest of us are going crazy for these days. It's not fitting for we who are dedicated to the ordained life to be crazy. The practitioners amongst us are even more infatuated than the rest of the world. This is really shameful.

Are the Kilesas adept or what? At deceiving sentient beings are they adept or what? No one can see this at all. Nobody but the Lord Buddha and his Arahant followers can see the Kilesas for what they are; that we are full of them, one hundred percent. They look and see the Dhamma, one hundred percent. Because of this they can speak about both sides. No matter how vile, or how refined, or how clever they are the Lord Buddha and the Sāvakas spoke about the lot.

The tricks and techniques used by the Kilesas to deceive worldlings, making them fall into the pit all the time, will continue endlessly. And why is that? Because of the superb astuteness of the Kilesas and that's it. The Dhamma can't penetrate. When it encounters the Kilesas, they brush it off completely. As soon as you mention doing good deeds of any kind, when they encounter the Kilesas, they are just swept away. The Kilesas make us lazy and idle. They discourage us, make us down hearted and weaken our effort; bringing us completely in line with them.

Talking about the Kilesas getting to the heart: What you listen to gets to the heart. What you watch gets to the heart. Enthusiasm gets to the heart. What you think about gets to the heart. All these things reach the heart and they're well known to be the Kilesas. Because they prick, they boil, they steam, and they deceive the entire heart, why wouldn't these things and the heart stick together? This being the case, how couldn't the whole world be addicted to these things?

If there was a hint, sufficient to allow (the heart) to get a clue about one another, saying this is wrong this is right or whatever, which was just enough to latch on to occasionally, who would get addicted to and submerged in the Kilesas to the extent that they are now? Such as those who understand and elevate the Dhamma, especially from the time Sotāpanna arose.

The Sotāpanna starts to understand the flow of Dhamma. They start to know the punishment metered out by the Kilesas. As they ascend to Sakidāgāmi and Anāgāmi the more they open up and clear out; right up to Arahant, the fruition of Arahant, an individual who has opened up and cleared out everything. No matter how many Kilesas there were, they've all been brought tumbling down. None survived.

If you wanted to say this is enjoyable, you could say it's enjoyable. It's fun to look at Lokadhātu which is full of the power of the Kilesas deceiving Sattaloka; boiling and steaming sentient beings everywhere, regardless of their status and regardless of their environment. The hell realms of Sattaloka are chock-a-block with beings. Beings throughout are eating up their Kamma. None of them are beyond the law of Kamma other than those who have put an end to the Kilesas.

Are the Kilesas smart or what? So then, are we going to be soft and flabby and weak in our efforts like this or not? We have to get stuck in! Sinking in the wheel of life like all the other beings how precious is this? Look at this and compare it (to realizing Dhamma). Then, see the value in the difference in the small amount of time spent in reaching freedom compared to the alternative. Then, struggle to make yourself completely free, the kind of freedom that is infinite and timeless.

So, what is it here; is the Dhamma of Lord Buddha precious or not? There's nothing that compares to the Dhamma. (The value) of the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha can't be estimated, guessed or anticipated. It happens in the heart in a way that is appropriate to the individual that has experienced it. Someone who hasn't experienced this won't be able to guess correctly no matter how many time they try. Someone who has experienced this needn't guess at all.

It's just right, appropriate, in every way. Nothing exceeds the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha, that's why it's called "just right". The Lord Buddha referred to this as Majjhima. Going forward is Majjhima, fitting and appropriate to the overcoming of the Kilesas. When it has reached the level of purity, it's Majjhima in the fundamentals of nature<sup>6</sup>. Nothing can better the fundamentals of nature. They are just right. The slightest criticism doesn't affect it; neither does the slightest praise because these belong to extremes. Nature is balanced in every way.

This was the type of Dhamma that the Lord Buddha performed. This was the type of Dhamma that the Sāvakas and Arahants performed and will everlastingly maintain.

The Lord Buddha proclaimed Nibbāna to be permanent. What this means is that a heart that is completely pure with Buddho is one who is and always will be everlasting. Kilesas don't lead to permanence. Wherever the Kilesas are in use **Aniccaṃ Dukkhaṃ Anattā** must work to ruin everything until they succeed because this is the law of the Three Signs of Being<sup>7</sup>. Everything about the conventional world is subject to the law of the Three Signs of Being. Vimutti, freedom, is a fundamental principle of nature that belongs to liberation from the law of the Three Signs of Being, so this law cannot reach it. So, I call on all of you to make up your minds' to practise.

The religion might be deteriorating but don't look elsewhere; look at your own heart. Observe your own heart, how it's deteriorating or improving.

Some days I think of those close to me, that's all I think about. For me to guide and teach those close to me is now very difficult, not like it used to be. All of you should take a good look. You know what it was like before, how I would get involved with those around me by way of teaching and advising them but these days what's the situation? Just have a good look yourself. I am on my own enough, day after day, however, even though I don't say anything, compassion overflows from my heart.

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<sup>6</sup> The fundamentals of nature being the way things really are rather than the way our deluded, ignorant view sees them.

<sup>7</sup> Aniccaṃ Dukkhaṃ Anattā are the Three Signs of Being

Because of this for me to get myself up and going, through various means, is done by the power of Mettā and Mettā alone. Whether it's what I teach monks and laypeople about physical objects and Nāma Dhamma, or whether it's educating the world in various techniques it all depends on being done through Mettā and compassion. To the extent that I can help out I do; depending on the amount of energy that I can muster. When it's exhausted, well, there'll no point in continuing. All the various realms of existence will then be left behind. This is why I keep trying.

I ask that all of you really make up you minds' to train yourselves.

I think this is enough Dhamma for now and I ask to finish here.

## Post Desana Narrative

You must persist with diligent effort.

*Translator: Next, came a section on the importance of the monks Pātimokkha, the recitation of their training rules performed every fortnight. This has been omitted to improve the readability for all readers.*

These days I can't get up to much. You who watch over me know what I mean. I have no wish to have a joke with you.

My upper robe looks like a leopard at the moment. It's speckled and soiled; something that would never happen before. I think but only about something specific. I don't really want to think about anything at all. This capacity has contracted all on its own. My thoughts are not as diverse as they used to be. Reasoning about anything has diminished now.

If anything drops, my robes become dirty and messy.

I don't want to think or read or take a look at anything. I look at what I have to and I think about just what I need to.

Instead of caring about myself it's the opposite, I'm not concerned at all. If I said there was no concern that wouldn't be an incorrect statement. It's one hundred percent certain that there is absolutely nothing about me personally that I am worried about. The only thing that worries me at this point in time is the state of the world. I am worried about those close to me because they lack direction, as I mentioned just now.

The Kilesas are ablaze all the time. People are just turning their heads towards the Kilesas; off in search of fuel and the fire to burn it on. They don't do an about face and get out of this. This is something really shameful and disgusting.

At present, lying down has become injurious again. Instead of being peaceful with the elements and Khandhas comfortable, lying down has become anything but that. Lying down has therefore become a source of irritation. I don't get to sleep. I don't get to sleep easily. The Citta doesn't go off anywhere; it stays where it is, however, it won't go into the Bhavanga, its sleepy state. My ligaments and tendons keep jerking by themselves because they are on their way to breaking up. What else can I say? I'm sore here and sore there; all over my body. Sometimes, I get up and walk Caṅkama.

During the night, I walk Caṅkama all the time. Whenever I feel like it, I'm off walking. There's no limit to this. I walk back and forth, back and forth on the Caṅkama path at the Kuti<sup>8</sup>.

I don't really get to sleep. Sleep is more like a nap. On any given night, it approaches three hours, doesn't it? Make it a full three hours although I'm afraid it's not quite the full amount. My sleep is in stops and starts. I no sooner doze off than I wake up. My sleep is not regular like it used to be. Before, as soon as I put my head on the pillow, I was asleep. As soon as I woke up, I got up; just like I would rest at 11 p.m. until 3 a.m. exactly and then I would wake up and rise immediately. During this time, I wouldn't stir.

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<sup>8</sup> A monks hut.

My constitution was good. I'd wake up when the time was just right because I had trained the elements and the Khandhas and they were sufficiently under the control of that training. These days, however, well, that's a different story. I lie there until I get fed up. During the day I rarely get any sleep. I might get fifteen minutes shut eye but probably not. When I'm sleepy, I doze off one time then wake up but it's nothing substantial.

Day or night, my sleep is no different. Consequently, my elements and Khandhas have no energy. There's just exhaustion. Walking Caṅkama is tiring.

When you get to this age, this is what it is like but we are attached to it every time, however, when you have no stake or no interest in this situation, if I describe this in worldly terms, I could say it's fun to watch this unfold. I could say that and what would be wrong with that? I have no concerns about this at all. When it's time for them to go, well, they can go; I'm referring specifically to my Khandhas. In terms of the state of the world, I am concerned about that.

The world is even more frantic than ever and getting worse. It doesn't have a clue what's going on. I am saddened by this and have great pity (for the world). Nobody understands about the Kilesas. It's a miracle that the Lord Buddha emerged at all; that He came to know all these things. Arahants know these things completely and intimately. They know the size of the danger these Kilesas present to the world. World is ignorant of this, so what can it do? Well, it can calm down. It can do that much, stage by stage, step by step. This is called, doing some practise. Sati/Paññā at this level understands the Kilesas at this level. If Sati/Paññā isn't at any level, it won't know the Kilesas; they'll be beyond our capabilities.

This is it. Anyone who gives some thought to it or bothers to notice it will see that the world is full of it. They notice that the world is Kilesas, which are harmful.

Birth is a good thing, isn't it? Someone murders someone else and says that's good. Just listen. Even though this is something that is really evil. This is a good fit for things to be tempered down.

We're no different to a water buffalo and the beings in world are like a buffalo. They haven't got a clue. They get lead by the nose and have no idea which way is up. Someone who is thorough will abandon (the Kilesas) now and will take the lead at that time. They will abandon them at that time and will take the lead until they succeed. They get on (with the job) until they have made a complete breakthrough; then, there's nothing left to lead. At this point, the knowledge of the punishment metered out by these Kilesas will fill their heart.

We practitioners don't have many responsibilities such that we have to go bothering others. You should be very cautious about bothering people. This has never been a problem before. It's always been the case that (practitioners) don't go around bothering others, asking them for things. They keep themselves to themselves.

When they study, they don't acquaint themselves with anyone else. They wouldn't know who to ask for anything. When they get out and practise, this is even more the case. They never put on anyone or ask them for anything. You should be very careful about this. Monks who pester about this and that, who ask for this and that, are difficult to put up with. I don't want any of this in Wat Pa Barn Tard.

Is there anyone in this monastery who has a special talent for pestering others about this and that? If there is anyone like this during pansa, when pansa is over I'll drive them away immediately.

Dissipation exists both in and out of pansa. What have you got to say about that? You must practise and keep the two<sup>9</sup> in step. How can you just wait for pansa? Just a minute, there's this problem. Just a minute, there's that problem with our supporters. Who should practising monks get to know when observing their hearts' all day still cannot beat the Kilesas?

I've put in every effort with all my might then I look at you lot and I just put up with you as if my ears are deaf and my eyes are blind. It's as if I don't look and I don't listen. It has to be like this for me to survive.

If you're going to live a contemplative life then you should practise that way. It would be folly to do otherwise.

As far as making recordings is concerned, don't go doing too much or this place will turn into a factory. Right now there are lot of people who are getting involved with the tapes and books. Lots of them have already been distributed. It's appropriate to halt and have a rest, so take a break. Don't get too busy. The monks will suffer and won't improve. You're going to help the world while you sink, are you?

I've been concerned for some time now. It's not that I haven't thought about it. I could have not thought about it, couldn't I? It is a crude subject. Lots and lots of stuff has already been distributed, including tapes.

I'm anxious about the circle of Kammatthāna (monks). Whichever circle it is, our group is shrinking again. Our lineage can easily fall apart.

The Kilesas are as fast as a bullet. They're not easy to keep up with. I keep saying this, they are lying in wait, ready to eat. Just think about it, who would have thought that the religion could be a warehouse for merchandise? Right now, this is what the religion is. Whether people think about this or not, I don't know. The Kilesas put their wares on show; coming out of every nook and cranny. Everything is a commodity. You can't make these wholeheartedly and with goodwill follow the principles that the religion teaches. There's just the Kilesas putting their wares on show.

Translator: The subject of the remaining three paragraphs in Thai are closely related to the audience and the time and have therefore been left untranslated.

Ok, we can finish now. This is enough.

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<sup>9</sup> What is done out of pansa and what is done during pansa.

GLOSSARY

Akāliko	Not bound by time
Āloko	Light
Anāgāmi	A Non-returner; one of the four Ariya Sangha; the stage prior to Arahant
Anattā	Not self; void of ego; one of the three characteristics of existence
Aniccā	Impermanence; one of the three characteristics of existence
Arahant	An enlightened being; one who has overcome Avijjā
Ārammana	Sense object, eg sound, odour, taste; the Thai derivation means feeling, mood or frame of mind
Asubha	Loathsomeness of the body as a meditation subject and as a description
Atthāna	Something that is impossible
Avīci	The name of one of the most frightful hell realms
Avijjā	Ignorance; the first component of Patīcasamuppāda
Bhāvanā	Meditation; mental development
Bhavanga	The stream of consciousness; sometimes translated as sub-consciousness, however, this is not like the western psychological meaning of sub-conscious. In its essence it is still but gets disturbed by sense objects, much like a stone thrown into a still pond cause ripples. Sleep and Samādhi are two different ways of entering and staying in the Bhavanga with quite different results.
Caṅkama	Meditating while walking backwards and forwards
Citta	The heart (not the physical heart); the seat of all mental activities; the fundamental “knowingness” corrupted by defilement
Devadatta	The cousin of the Lord Buddha who was reborn in the hell realms because, out of desire to replace the Lord Buddha as the leader of the Sangha, he caused physical harm to the Lord Buddha by throwing a stone at him.
Devatā	A celestial being inhabiting realms higher in the cosmos than the human realm
Dhamma	The teaching of the Lord Buddha; a law; phenomena; the third of the Triple Gems
Dhammadhātu	Dhamma element, synonymous with Nibbāna; non-conditioned element; the essence of Dhamma
Dhutanga	Austerity practices, 13 in all. Monks may practice none or only some; there is no compulsion to practice any

Dukkha	Suffering; one of the three characteristics of existence; one of the 4 Noble Truths
Ekaggatācitta	The Citta focused on itself.
Ekaggatārammana	The Citta focused on a single object.
Hiri	Moral shame
Jhāna	A state of mental absorption
Kāma	Sensuality; thence Kāma-rāga - sensuous lust, Kāma-loka – sensuous world
Kamma	Wholesome or unwholesome action. In Thai it usually refers to unwholesome action only
Kammatthāna	Literally “working ground”. Meditation subjects and the practice of meditation. Often used to refer to the monks of the forest tradition who practise meditation
Kathina	A ceremony at the end of the rains retreat (pansa) where the lay community offers cloth and robes to the monks
Khandha	Aggregates; the 5 groups – form (corporeality), feelings, recollection (perception), mental formations, consciousness
Kilesa	Defilements: Greed, Hatred and Delusion
Lokadhātu	The world element ie, all the elements in all the spheres of existence. The three spheres of existence: kāma-loka (the sensual world); rupa-loka (the fine material world); arupa-loka (the immaterial world). Within each world there are a number of different realms.
Magga	Path; a conscious moment unique to each of the four stages of Enlightenment; the Noble Eightfold Path
Mahā	Great; a title given to a monk who has passed certain examinations
Majjhima	Middle, as in the Middle Way
Māra	The Evil One
Maya	Achieved through the practise of; accomplished via practise
Metta	Loving kindness
Nāma	Mind; a collective term for feelings, recollection, mental formations and consciousness
Nesajji	The sitters practice. The thirteenth Dhutanga (austerity practices) where monks avoid the reclining posture.
Neyya	The third grade of person; trainable
Nibbāna	Extinction; freedom from Avijja; the state of Enlightenment
Nimitta	A mark or a sign; a mental image; vision
Ottappa	Moral dread

Pacceka-Buddha	A Buddha enlighten without the benefit of having listen to the Dhamma but who does not go on to teach others; sometimes referred to as a Silent Buddha
Padaparama	The lowest grade of person; hopeless or untrainable
Paññā	Discernment; wisdom
Pansa	Three month retreat for monks taken during the rainy season
Parikamma	A word repeated in order to help focus concentration; preparation for concentration
Parinibbāna	Full Nibbāna; often used to refer to the state of the Lord Buddha after the extinction of the 5 Khandha
Pariyatti	Learning the Dhamma
Paṭipatti	Practising the Dhamma
Paṭivedha	Penetrating the Dhamma and realizing its goal
Phala	Fruit; result; a conscious moment unique to each of the four stages of Enlightenment
Rāga	Lust; greed
Rukkhamulasenāsam	Living at the foot of a tree, a Dhutanga practice.
Rupa	Form; corporeality; one of the 5 Khandha
Sādhu	A salutation; it is well; a positive acknowledgement of what has been said before
Sakidāgāmi	A Once Returner; will have no more than one more human life
Samādhi	Concentration
Samatha	Tranquility; the practice of Samādhi
Sammā	Right; perfect
Sammuti	Conventional; the world of supposition where we “suppose” that elements that come together in certain ways are a dog, or person, or a building etc but the elements themselves make no such claim. They are what they are.
Sampajañña	Clarity of consciousness
Samsāra	The round of birth, death and re-birth; the wheel of life
Samudaya	The origin of Dukkha (suffering). The second of the Four Noble Truths.
Sandiṭṭhiko	Seen here and now by oneself
Sangha	The order of monks; the third of the Triple Gems

Sankhāra	This term has several meanings depending on context: Mental formations – one of the 5 Khandha; Kāmic formations; conditioned phenomena
Saññā	Recollection; memory; perception; one of the five Khandha
Sati	Mindfulness
Sattaloka	The world of sentient beings
Sāvaka	A follower of the Lord Buddha. The term is usually reserved for those followers who have attained any of the 4 stage of enlightenment
Senasānam	A resting place
Sila	Morals; moral precepts
Sotāpanna	A Stream Enterer; someone who is assured of reaching Nibbana
Svākkhato	Well-expounded
Taco	Skin
Tanhā	Craving; the cause of Dukkha;
Tathāgata	A term used by the Lord Buddha when referring to Himself.
Tipitaka	The three baskets; the three division of the Pali Cannon – Vinaya, Sutta, Abhidhamma
Ucgateñña	The highest grade of person; genius
Udapādi	Arising, arisen
Upādāna	Clinging; attachment
Vedanā	Feelings; one of the five Khandha
Vimutti	Deliverance (from suffering)
Vinaya	Code of conduct for monks
Viññāna	Consciousness; one of the five Khandha
Vipaciteñña	The second highest grade of person; intellectual
Vipassanā	Insight; insight meditation
Visuddhi	Purity; Purification