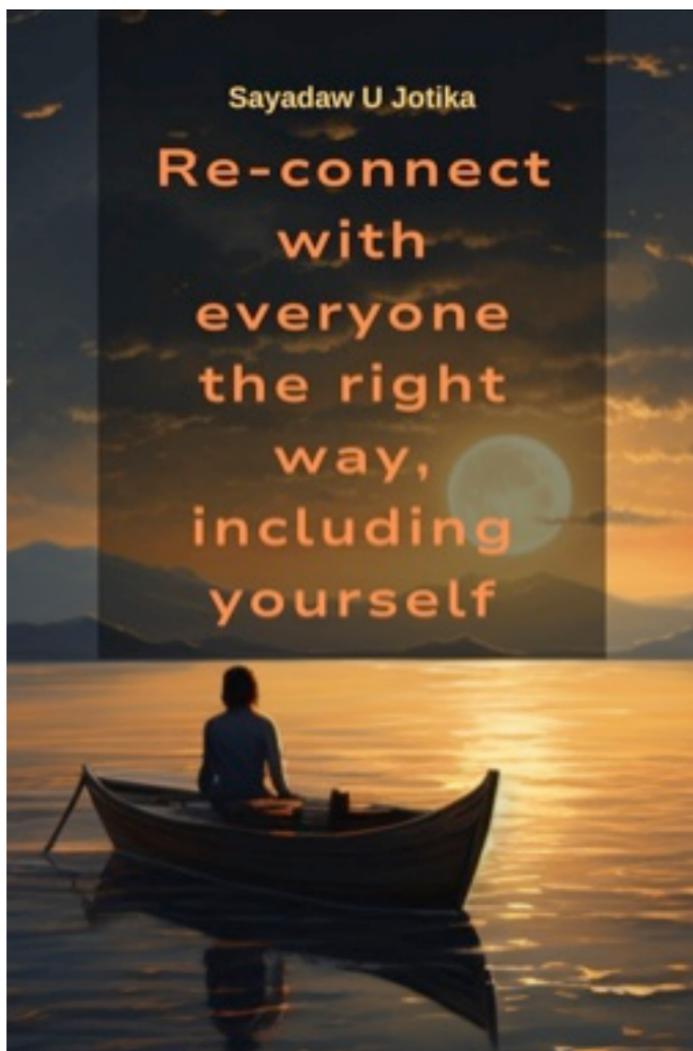


Sayadaw U Jotika

**Re-connect  
with  
everyone  
the right  
way,  
including  
yourself**



Dhamma Talk

**Re-connect with  
everyone the right  
way, including  
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**Sayadaw U Jotika**

*Transcribed by Viet Hung*

*with support of Sonix.ai tool*

# Recorded Audio

Recorded audio can be found here: [https://  
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connect-with-everyone-the-right-way-especially-  
yourself/](https://viethungnguyen.com/2023/12/26/dhamma-talk-re-connect-with-everyone-the-right-way-especially-yourself/)

*V. 01.00*

# Words from transcriber

I got this dhamma talk from the Internet without title. Based on its content, I'd suggest to name it as "Reconnect with everyone the right way, including yourself". The more I recite those sentences shared by Sayadaw, the more I can feel the power of doing that. And as always, Sayadaw U Jotika also "fuel" a lot of motivation to Vipassana meditators like me through his words and teachings. For that, it would be never enough to thank Sayadaw. Please find the transcript below. May all mindfulness, peace and happiness be with you.

*Việt Hùng*

# Re-connect with everyone the right way, including yourself

Welcome, everybody. Another day for beginners. Although, it is a day for beginners, most of you are long timers. Most of you have been meditating for a long time. But it is very important to keep this beginner's mind. Have you ever heard about the book, the title of which is "Beginner's Mind". You heard of it already? No. There is a book. The title is "Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind". I have read that book a long time ago. It's a very good book. And it is also very important to really have a beginner's mind, open mind. The beginner mind is ready to receive anything. Open. If you think that "oh, I know everything", then you stop learning. So, I trained myself also to have this beginner's mind. Always open, learning. Always learning. Learning has no end. We'll be learning until we die. It's a process that goes on and on. So, all of us are in some ways beginners.

So, to open tonight, I would like to read or recite a few things. It's from a book that I have read, "Dare to connect", written by Susan Jeffers. It's a very good book. If you can find a copy, buy it, have it, read a few pages a day, every day. It will make a big difference in your life. It's not just another book about making friends. It's a very deep and meaningful book. It's first how to make friend with yourself. Then, you later learn how to make friends with others. And some of her sentences are very deep and meaningful and very simple. So it's in a way practicing loving kindness meditation or acceptance meditation, whichever way you like to call it. So, I'll read a few lines, slowly. Repeat that in your mind. You didn't have to say loud, but repeat that in your mind and really feel it. Make it real.

So the other day, I talk about participating. So for example, if you read a story book, to really get what the author is trying to say, you have to participate in the story. You have to imagine that you are the the characters in the story, and you feel their joy, you feel their sadness, you feel their frustration, you feel their depressions even sometimes. Whatever it is, you identify with the character. But you know that you are not the character. But in some ways, you participate in it, then you really understand it. So, whatever we experience, if we participate in it, then we understand it very deeply. If we just hear the word and think the word and don't participate in it, it has no meaning. So,

real meaning is not in the words. So, there are two levels of meaning. One level of meaning is called, in Pāli, saddattha. Saddattha means grammatical meaning. Sadda means sound. And in Pāli it means grammar also. Sound and grammar are the same in Pāli. Sadda means sound, sadda means grammar, [can't get the word]. So, you hear the sound and you have learned what the sound means. So, you understand it grammatically. There is another level of meaning which is called sabhāvattha. Sabhāva means nature, natural, real. So another meaning is natural meaning, real meaning. So, first we hear this word and understand it grammatically, and then later, we go beyond the words and understand the reality of it. This is very important: Understand the reality of it. So, to understand the reality, we have to live in it. It becomes part of ourselves. So to live the teaching is very important, not just to think, not just to recite, not just to read.

So, I recite or read for you, one line after another, very slowly. You recite that in your mind, finally, and feel it, really live it, make it real for you. Only when you make it real, it will have an effect on you. It can change your attitude, change your mind. If you don't make it real for you, if you don't live it, you just hear it and forget it, it will not have much effect on you. But, even if you hear it and remember it, although at the moment you might not be able to tune into it and make it real for you, if you remember it and whenever you

remember it again later in the future, if you recite that in your mind, you try to make it real for you. Tune into it slowly and slowly, it will become real for you. And it will have real good effect on you. So, we teach about mettā very much. On Sunday, we recite Mettā Sutta, every Sunday. Loving-kindness, we talk a lot about loving-kindness. It is very important. It is the foundation of our life. It is the foundation of our practice. Without mettā, we cannot survive. Without mettā we cannot practice any other higher spiritual practice. Mettā – loving kindness is the foundation of our life, of our practice.

So, the first line is: “I acknowledge your presence.” Your presence, all of you, “I acknowledge your presence.” You are just like me, a human being. Older or younger, it doesn’t matter. Man or woman, it doesn’t matter. You are like me. You are human being. “I acknowledge your presence.” Really feel it. We need to acknowledge each other. The opposite of acknowledgement, what would that be? Opposite of acknowledge? What is...? Neglect or ignore? Ignore. Okay... So, how do you feel when somebody ignore you, just pretend that you are not there? Especially, in your home or with your friends, if they just ignore you, if they just pretend that they don’t see you, they don’t know that you are there, how would you feel? So, I told you a few times ago, ... before, when I walk on the street and somebody smiles at me, I feel very happy. Somebody say hello to me, I feel very happy.

And I say “good morning”, because usually I go out and walk in the morning, people say “good morning”, I feel so happy. That is the gift, which is very precious, very precious. Somebody say “good morning” to you. He or she acknowledge me as a human being. I look very different because I wear different clothes. But take away the clothes, I’m just a human being, just like you. My face might look different, because I’m a Eurasian. So, I look like an Asian, but not totally Asian. So anyway, how I look doesn’t matter. How you look doesn’t matter. You might look beautiful, or maybe just plain. You might look... your (skin) color may be white, may be yellow, may be brown, may be dark. That doesn’t matter. The color doesn’t matter. Maybe you are a man or a woman or old or young, that doesn’t matter. You are a human being, just like me. When I feel happy, it’s just like you feel happy. Your happiness and my happiness, not much difference. Your sadness and my sadness, not much difference. Your joy and my joy, not much difference. The quality is the same.

So, please recite this in your heart, from your heart very deeply, “I acknowledge your presence.” Each one of you here... “I acknowledge your presence.” Even though I don’t touch you with my hands, I touch you with my mind. So, as a monk, we very rarely touch people, even each other monks. We very rarely touch people. But even though we don’t touch them with our hands, we touch them with our heart. And that is more

important. And after a while, we learn to touch people with our look. I can look a person and really touch the person. Yes, you are there, I know. I know how you feel. This is very important. Sometimes we touch each other with our hands, but we don't touch each other with our heart. And although we are in contact physically, our heart was apart. And that makes us feel very lonely. So, I talk about loneliness quite a lot. Because I was very lonely. For many, many years, I was very lonely. I cannot touch anybody and nobody can touch me. But slowly and slowly I learn to understand people, get close to people, touch them, let them touch me. I open myself and let them know this is me. So, quite a few times I talk about myself. Some of them are very painful and ugly stories. But I really want... Most of my friends know this is me, this is real me, not just a picture, not just a painting, not a statue. A person with feelings... So, I feel very grateful whoever acknowledged my presence. For the acknowledgement, I feel very grateful and very happy. It nourishes me. So, "I acknowledge your presence". Think of that. Feel it. Make it real. Each of us here, each of you. I don't know your name, but I know you.

And another one even more important. But if we cannot do the first one, it will be very hard for us to do the second. "I salute our humanness. I salute our humanness." We are human and our humanness I salute, I respect. It's very deep and meaningful if you can really feel it. In the beginning, I think it might

really shake you. You'll be shaking to salute our humanness. So, I talk about having a big mirror near the bottom of the Buddha image. If you have a Buddha image at home, also, if you pay respect to the Buddha, if you bow down to the Buddha, I advise many of my friends to have a big mirror. And every time you bow down to the Buddha, what are you doing? You are also bowing down to yourself. And in the mirror, the image is also bowing down to you and you are bowing down to the image also. Make it real. It is not a funny thing. Don't think, think it is funny. This is what a human being should do. That's why we are here. So, some of my friends, some of my students who are meditators, they meditate and then when their mind becomes very calm and still and clear, the mind is free from anger, free from greed, free from lust, free from frustration, free from depression, free, free from sadness, all those things free, the mind becomes very clear, calm and peaceful and pure... and one of my students said, for that moment, for that mental state, I salute myself.

Can we salute ourselves? If we can, we are very lucky. So, "I salute our humanness." I really respect our humanness. Human beings are spiritual beings. No matter what people are doing, they might be alcoholics or they might be drug addicts, they might be doing something horrible, but deep down they are spiritual. And just because they have not developed their spirituality, they are doing all those horrible things. If

we develop our spiritual nature, we will not do that. We will be very happy and satisfied with ourselves. Just eating some plain vegetarian food or anything, just wearing plain clothes, living in a plain cabin, we will still be very satisfied with ourself. Nothing else can really make us satisfied with ourselves, with our life. It is only by developing our spirituality that we will feel satisfied with ourselves, satisfied with our life, no matter what happened in our life. So, a lot of painful experiences happened to me. So, I understand that it happened to others too. So, whenever other people have very painful experience, I can sympathize with that person or empathize with that person. So, going through life is a very painful process. Anyway, you should learn from those painful experiences too. No matter what you have done, no matter what you are doing, you are a human being. You are spiritual. So, "I salute our humanness." In a way, you think that "I respect myself and I respect you."

So, another one, "I welcome what you have to offer this world. I welcome what you have to offer this world." Each of us has something to offer. We can. We always can. Whether in a big way or in a small way, it doesn't matter. Each of us can offer something to this world. So, instead of asking "what can the world give me?" Ask yourself, "what can I give to the world? What can I give? How can I make the world a better place?" "I welcome what you have to offer this world." There are many things we can offer. Just like what I

said a moment ago. Just saying hello is you are offering something. Just smiling at another person, just nodding your head, acknowledging is offering. We have a lot to offer to each other. Just try to do that as much as possible. Even patting your cat or dog, you are offering something. Even looking after a plant, growing a plant, you're offering something. Even picking up trash and put it in the trash bin, you're offering something, you are making the world a better place. And this should be part of our meditation, part of our spiritual practice. So, we have a lot to offer. We can offer much, much more than that. So, "I welcome what you have to offer this world." Tell yourself, "I have a lot to offer. I can, I will."

And another one, "I hail the beauty in you. I hail the beauty in you." Do you feel yourself beautiful, in your heart? Keep trying... Deep inside, all of us are very beautiful. Just get deeper and deeper, you'll find that there's beauty there. There's kindness. There's mettā, compassion, deep in there. So, "I hail the beauty in you." If you develop your heart, the older you become, the more beautiful you become. I know a lot of old people here also, in Burma also. I took some pictures of very old people, but they look so beautiful, very kind and soft. Their smile is real smile. They are not just wearing a smile. It really comes from their heart, from having lived for a long time and understood and accepted. Here also, I see some older people, very beautiful. So, "I hail the beauty in you." Feel it. Make

it real. "I hail the beauty in you." All of us are beautiful.

Or another line, "I receive you with a loving heart. I receive you with a loving heart." Just imagine yourself stretching your arms and receiving somebody, even in your imagination. Just imagine yourself stretching your arms, welcoming, receiving another human being. "I receive you with the loving heart." Most of the time, we keep the gate of our heart closed. No entry sign on the door. Take that off. Open the gate. Feel it very deeply. "I receive you with a loving heart." It will make your heart very warm and soft. All of us need that quite a lot. You cannot love too much.

So, I repeat that again, "I acknowledge your presence." You are there. You are a human being just like me. Whether you are old or young, whether you are a man or a woman, it doesn't matter. Whether you are Asian or European, white or yellow or brown, it doesn't matter. "I acknowledge your presence. I salute our humanness. I salute our humanness. I welcome what you have to offer this world." You have a lot to offer. It won't cost you much. In fact, the more you give away, the more it nourishes you. The more you give away kindness, the more you give away acknowledgement, the more it nourishes you. "I hail the beauty in you." Not just beautiful face and beautiful body, but also the beautiful heart, kindness, compassion. "I hail the beauty in you. I receive you

with a loving heart.” Really feel it and imagine you are receiving somebody, with a loving heart... even one person, maybe your parents, maybe your brothers or sisters, maybe your spouse, maybe your children, maybe your friends, and even strangers, sometimes it’s okay, even to touch them and hug them. But very difficult to do that. So anyway, in your imagination, with an open heart and open arms, receive somebody.

“No matter how anyone reacts to me, I know I am a worthwhile person.” Don’t let anybody judge your worth, no matter what others think about you, how they think about you. “No matter how anyone reacts to me. I know I am a worthwhile person.” Do you feel worthwhile? Feeling of worthiness is very important, worth your friendship, worth your kindness. “I am a pleasure to know.” Maybe sometimes you find it very difficult to really believe that. But keep trying. “I am a pleasure to know.” If you become really friendly and if you really feel open to another person, and if you really wish that person happy, I think nine out of ten person will be very happy to see you. I leave one exception. Most people are willing to do this. If we are open and if we are really kind, and if we don’t judge people, they’ll be happy to meet us. So, “I am a pleasure to know.” People who know me are happy. They are happier. So, I know a lot of people who are now meditating for quite a few years. Before they meditated, they were very unhappy and very unfriendly most of the time. And they could not

believe that people can really love them. So one person, after he meditated for two years, he became a very kind and peaceful person and found that other people, not relatives, love him very much, happy to see him. And he said, "When my relatives, my parents, my grandparents, my brothers and sisters and my relatives love me, I thought, of course, because we are relatives. But when those people who are not my relatives love me, I felt very happy. I thought, assured that I am a lovable person."

So, it might take some time to really make it real and feel it. But anyway, keep trying. It's worth trying. Now I can feel this. When I was younger, I cannot feel that. I did not feel that even my parents really love me. Although now, I know they love me in their own way. At that time, I misinterpreted them quite a lot. It is quite natural for younger people to be. But now I know they love me, although they could not understand me. So there was a lot of misunderstanding.

"I am proud of who I am. I am proud of who I am." Are you ashamed of who you are? You don't need to. You are just a human being. It doesn't matter whether you are... you have a big degree or not, it doesn't matter, whether you have a lot of money or not... you are a human being. "I am a lovable person." Keep that in your heart, it will come real. "I am a lovable person. I have much to give." I have much to give. Writing a

letter, sending a postcard is giving. “I bring light wherever I go.” If you practice it, it will become real. If you practice meditation regularly, you will develop your spiritual qualities, your inner qualities, and it will become real for you. It might take some time. So, keep these thoughts and keep thinking about it and develop it slowly. So, for this mettā meditation, I spend about half an hour. It’s not much time actually.

And here is something that I want to read to you again. And it is another letter from my younger daughter. I read a few letters from my elder daughter. This is a letter from my younger daughter. She is now about 22.5 years old. [can’t get the word] she’s meditating and she is a beginner. The elder one has been meditating for quite a few years now. She started quite early, so she’s been meditating for about five years. The younger one was not very interested in the beginning, so she started very late after she finished her college degree. Just to encourage younger people and beginners too. In the beginning, she said, I’d like to ... respectfully. So, this is the way, in Burmese, we write to our parents or to a monk, to a teacher. “I received another of your letters. After reading your letter, I felt a lot of joy.” So, very happy to hear that somebody, after reading my letter, feeling a lot of joy, even though it’s my daughter. Some of my friends also send a lot of fax from Singapore. So, I’ll skip some of the things and read the part about the meditation. And how many of you here can understand Burmese? So

anybody understand Burmese? Anna-Sophie understand? Anybody else? No. So you are the only one who can understand Burmese.

So anyway, she said, “now I practice formal meditation.” This is the word she used [in Burmese], formal meditation. [in Burmese] which means, “now I practice formal meditation in the morning and also in the evening.” So formal meditation means sitting in a place like this in a formal posture, meditative posture, sitting like this. And regularly, you set some time for that and regularly at that time you do that every day, every day. So, when you get into the habit of doing that, when the time comes, you stop whatever you are doing and then go and meditate. So in the morning... It’s better to meditate the first thing in the morning without doing anything, without even eating anything. If you feel really hungry, just drink a cup of milk or whatever quickly and meditate. Informal meditation, “and I also practice informal meditation throughout the day.” So, I will read exactly what she wrote. “Informal meditation... [read in Burmese] I try my best not to lose mindfulness.” Yes. So, trying to be mindful. Sometimes you forget, but try it again and again so that you maintain your mindfulness, which means I try to maintain my mindfulness throughout the day no matter what I am doing. “And because of that, people with whom I work together, some are older, some are younger, and some are of the same age, treated me with kindness, with love and respect.” So

when you become calm and peaceful, naturally people love you and respect you and treat you kindly. So, if we want another person to treat us kindly, the best thing we can do is to be calm and peaceful, to be happy, not to judge another person.

“And also in my relationship with other people, there isn’t any problem.” So exactly in Burmese: [in Burmese]. “No conflict in my relationship. When I talk with people, I talk mindfully. So, I make no mistake at all.” [in Burmese] How do you say that? I don’t know how to say that. When when she speaks, talks mindfully, she doesn’t make mistakes. “Therefore, my relationships with others are very smooth. Other people have their conflicts with each other, but I don’t get caught in between them.” So when you keep mindfulness, when you are mindful and calm and peaceful, you don’t take sides. You are kind. You love them, you respect them. But when another other people get into a conflict, you don’t get stuck into the conflict. So, this is very important. You don’t take sides, you don’t get stuck into the conflict because you are mindful.

So, I am reading these things to you just to show that, or in a way to prove that if you maintain your mindfulness throughout the day, it will improve the quality of your life in every way, not just in one way, in every way. “I’m free in my relationship with others.” So, you don’t get attached to them. You don’t become

dependent on them. Because you are mindful, you are independent, you are kind. You are concerned about their well-being, but still you maintain your independence. “When I’m not talking with other people and doing what I need to do, I try to do everything with my mindfulness as much as possible.” [Talk in Burmese] means, it is also Pāli word, means mindfulness, awareness, consciousness. So, “I maintain my consciousness. I try to do everything as much as possible mindfully. And I like living that way.” So, this is the best way to live, to be unmindful, to be absent minded is really dull and painful way to live, very unproductive way of living, absent mindedly, unmindfully living. So, living mindfully is the best way to live. “And I enjoy peace of mind more and more.” This is just roughly I translate that... [in Burmese] So, she feels the peacefulness of mine very strongly, very clearly. So, she is a very young lady, a beginner. She can feel that now. So, you can do it, you can do it. You have all the qualities, all the tools you need. You have the qualities. You only need to develop that qualities. You already have those qualities.

So, “Therefore, I promised myself that I will go on living every day mindfully without missing a day.” So she promised herself. This is also very important: Promise to yourself. “I am going to live every day mindfully. And because of that promise, my meditation becomes more effective.” You see, promise makes effective. If you really promise yourself, “I will try my

best to be mindful the whole day, every day”, and if you do that with real honesty, if you do that wholeheartedly, it makes you become more mindful. So, this is very important point. Actually, this younger daughter, she doesn’t talk much. She doesn’t write much. “Because of mindfulness, both my body and my mind become tranquil and I feel that very clearly. And in my hostel, one elder sister...” This is in Burmese, we call anybody elder than you, you call sister or brother. It’s a very respectful way of calling. But that person is not real sister. But she said the elder sister who lives in our hostel said this younger sister’s face looks so peaceful. So, people around her notice that she doesn’t become uptight or upset. So people notice that. “And I also noticed that too. My facial expressions and the way I talk is not the same anymore. It has changed. It becomes more relaxed.” So, when you become more mindful, you become more relaxed. You are not in a hurry. You don’t get agitated. See how effective it is if you can live your daily life like that every day.

“And I really like the change. And I know that I should try to make mindfulness... more...” [talk in Burmese] How do you say that? Very hard to translate Burmese into English. It means the gap in between one mindfulness and another mindful state. We can become less and less compact. I don’t know how to say that. I hope you understand. Because sometimes we forget. And after a long time we

remember again. So, she is trying to make that gap smaller and smaller, become more and more mindful, continuous mindfulness, to become continuously mindful. “Now, the person, the lady with whom I share my room is also becoming interested in meditation. And she is also beginning to meditate.” So, when you really meditate, when you become relaxed and or in your manner, you don’t live like “I’m better. You are not.” You don’t say that. You don’t even think about that. You just live very mindfully and peacefully. And people feel that and appreciate that. So, another person also wants to meditate. So, this is a very good way of teaching.

And so, “she is also beginning to meditate. She also listened to your Dhamma tapes.” So, I’ve made more than 100 hours of Dhamma tapes in Burma. More than 100 cassettes. I brought about 50 here and yes, I brought with me here about 50 and more than 100,000, maybe 200,000 copies distributed. So, this person also is listening to one of my cassettes [talk in Burmese] Delight in work when your brains delight. Will you admit you are happy? You are happy in your job. And I have made a tape on that: How to be happy in your workplace. What to do? Your relationship or your attitude to your work. your attitude to the people you work with. And be mindful of that moment to moment, every moment. “So, she is listening that tape and she said that it really talks about her.” What I talked about in the tape was just what she needed.

“And those people I know ... I talk about mindful living as much as I can. And some of them are experimenting with it.” So, very happy, very happy news. “I thank you very much for giving me this invaluable wisdom and I love you more. [talk in Burmese].

So, this is a letter from a real person and she is very young. She is a beginner and meditating and benefiting from that meditation. So, if you really want to improve the quality of your life, if you really want to benefit from meditation practice, this is what you should do. Meditate at least twice a day in the morning and in the evening, formal meditation, sitting in a place depends on how much time you have or how much time time you can make. If you are willing, you can make time. Maybe you need to give up something else. And maintain mindfulness throughout the day, every day. If you just sit for a few minutes a day and expect that that will improve the quality of your life all the time, which means that you meditate for 30 minutes, for example, and you become absent-minded for 16 hours a day, which the expectation will become stronger. Those expectation in 16 hours will be stronger. Although, it is better than nothing. Even if you meditate for ten minutes a day, it will affect your life. But if you meditate more, you will get more benefits from that. And that is the best thing you can do for yourself. Yes, that’s what I am going to talk about. That’s what I am going to talk about. So, I need

a lot of time. So, please be patient. And I thank you very much for giving me so much time to talk.

So, this is the translation of Mahasatipatthana Sutta that I translated with the help of U Dhamminda. So, we translated this together. And a lot of people got a copy and one copy went to America. So, I received a letter from America... Here. "Greetings from venerable sisters and brothers in the Dhamma. Greetings from America. Earlier this year, I came across your splendid English translation of the Mahasatipatthana Sutta, The Great Discourse on Steadfast Mindfulness, copyrighted in 1986. It is a marvelous Dhamma gift. And every Vipassana meditator who has seen it believes it to be the best rendition they have ever used." Very happy to hear that again. "The copious and clear explanatory notes are exceptional. We have a right livelihood project in Denver that is in Colorado medical. I am writing to request permission to reprint this work. Any donations received are used for photocopying costs and miscellaneous expenses. I would be very grateful if you would kindly send your permission to reprint this Dhamma offering as soon as possible." So, I sent my permission. "Thank you very much for this exceptional Dhamma gift. With all good wishes and sending much mettā. Respectfully yours in the Dhamma". Very, very happy to hear that somebody really appreciated what we did. We put a lot of work in it. So, here's the translation. It is not a proper book.

And in the introduction part and this is very important... introduction part is very important.

“Please practice in accordance with this Mahasatipatthana Sutta, so that you can see why it is acknowledged as the most important Sutta that the Buddha taught.” If you are really serious about meditation, if you are really serious about improving the quality of your mind and the quality of your life in every way, you need to study and practice it. Slowly and slowly making your practice complete until your life become your meditation. Your life and your meditation become the same, until you can say that my life is my meditation. So, your life and meditation, they are not separate. Meditation is not part of your life. Meditation is your whole life. It can become. If you can do that, then you will know that your life is not the same anymore. So, if you want something, you have to pay for it. You get as much as you give. If you are willing to give yourself, your whole self, then you get quite a lot. So, “Try to practice all the different sections from time to time, as they are all useful. But in the beginning, start with something simple, such as being mindful while walking or breathing.” Anything you can start from anything. But slowly and slowly, you must practice mindfulness all the time, no matter what you are doing, no matter where you are, even in the toilet. So, I’ll leave that section for you, practicing meditation in the toilet. Because most people have never thought about it. They think they need a special

place to meditate. Although it is very good to have a special place to meditate, very good. So, “or the mindfulness of in and out breathing”. You can do anything, you can begin from being mindful of breathing, or being mindful of walking. It does not matter where you start. It doesn’t matter from where you start. “Then as you practice these, you will be able to practice the other sections contained within the Sutta and you will find that all the four satipatthana can be practiced concurrently.” Very important.

So, we have tried very hard to translate this one. I hope more people use it. “A Sutta should be read again and again, as you will tend to forget its message. The message here in this Sutta is that you should be mindful of whatever is occurring in the body and mind, whether it be good or bad, and thus you will become aware that all conditioned phenomena are impermanent, unsatisfactory and not-self. So, this is the introduction part. And this is the introduction of the translation. But for the introduction of the real Sutta, I will skip some parts that is not really relevant at this moment. So, here the Buddha said, “Bhikkhus”. Bhikkhu means monks, because he was talking to the monks. Actually, the Buddha taught this Mahasatipatthana Sutta to the lay people who were living in a big village market town called Kammasadhamma, to the villagers, to the people in that town, in the Kuru country, which is in the north west of India. But anyway, when they put record on of

the Sutta, the Buddha talk about these things to the monks, so that they can remember and carry the teaching. So, the Buddha said that “Bhikkhus, this is the one and the only way for the purification of the minds of beings, for overcoming sorrow...” For overcoming sorrow. Do you like that? Yes, we like to overcome sorrow... “and lamentation, for the cessation of physical and mental pain, for attainment of the noble paths, and for the realization of Nibbana.” This is the only path to be mindful, always, very simple actually. And if you really practice it, then you will know this is the truth.

And in these two paragraphs we have 11 notes, not footnotes, but the notes on the back of the book. So, if you want, you can make a photography of this book and have it. I really want you to study it. Because you come here repeatedly. You want to learn. Put more effort. In note number seven... Let me see. “Cessation in Pāli which means atthanamaya, is generally translated as ‘destruction’”. I did not like that word “destruction”, so we changed that word, but we do not know exact meaning, “which might wrongly imply an active attack on the physical and mental pain.” So, when we meditate, we do not attack anything. We don’t try to eradicate anything. We just watch it. So, “However, the physical and mental pain cease due to lack of craving, just as a fire is extinguished due to lack of fuel.” So, we are sitting near a fire and putting more fuel in the fire and complaining that it’s hot, it’s

hot, it's hot. If we just stop putting more fuels into the fire, it will just burn out. So, what we do is not to put more fuel. So, even if you attack it, you are putting more fuel in it, actually. So just watch it very patiently.

So, this is a very important book on meditation, very concise, very compact. Each word has very deep meaning. So, all of you who are beginners and also long timers, I would advise you to study this Sutta. There are many other translations too. In the library also, you will find many translations. So, any translation is good enough. So, here the Buddha said, "What are these four? Here, in this teaching, monks, dwell perceiving again and again in the body as just the body." Just the body, not a being, not a self. So, on the part of meditation, on the section on breathing. I will skip so much, but I want to give a course on this. It will take a few weeks, but this time I am giving another course. So I do not have enough time for this Sutta. But when I get a chance, I will do that. So, "keeping his body erect and directs his mindfulness towards the object of mindfulness. Then only with keen mindfulness he breathes in and only with keen mindfulness he breathes out." So, you keep your mindfulness very focused on breathing. Breathing in, breathing out... That is how you begin, sitting very relaxed, keep the whole body relaxed, except just enough energy and effort to keep your body straight like this. Otherwise, keep your shoulders relaxed, your face relax, your arms relaxed. Place everything

relaxed within. Keep all your attention to your breathing, all your attention. The air coming in, touching your nostril, feel it, feel it. This is the word, very important, to feel it, not to think about it, to feel it. And when the air goes out, you feel it. It touches your nostril. You can feel it going out. So to feel it, not to think about it. So, you know, you have heard a lot about breathing meditation. I talked about it quite a few times. So, just to give you some general idea of how to be mindful throughout the day, right?

So, “while going forward or while going back, do so with clear understanding.” Or whether you are going to or coming back, no matter where, from where to where, you do it very mindfully. So, for example, you come from your home to this place, on your way, try to be mindful as much as possible, taking each step. If you come by car, getting into the car, opening the door and getting inside and closing the door and starting your car and driving it, all your movements, hands and legs. And when you reach here, you park your car. You shut off the engine, open the door. You come out of the car, close the door again and you take many steps. You get into this place. So, every step, be mindful.

“While bending or stretching his limbs. He does so with clear understanding.” Bending or stretching... All the time we are bending and stretching. Little fingers, bending and stretching many times. Moving...

Every time you move, you bend or you stretch. Because without bending and stretching, you cannot move. This means be mindful of every movement, whether it is big or small, no matter which part of the body. Even when you blink your eyes, notice it. So, when you become really mindful, you know that you are going to open your eyes, even before you open your eyes. You know that when you open your eyes, you are aware of that. So, be aware of every movement in your body. You can feel it, feel the movement and be mindful of it. "While eating..." So, eating meditation. We eat so many times a day during slow time, eating and drinking, "while eating, drinking, chewing and savoring, he does so with clear understanding; while urinating or defecating..." So, you meditate even then, nothing is left out from your practice. That is what I mean: Your life becomes a meditation. So, "while urinating or defecating, he does so with clear understanding." You are aware of the sensation, when you really want to urinate. So painful, the bladder is so full and tight. You can't wait anymore. So, you go and urinate. At each step, you are aware of that. When you reach there, you urinate and you feel the tightness getting less and less, less and less, less and less, and you become more at ease and relaxed. You do the whole process. "While walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking..." Falling asleep, before you fall asleep, you are lying, meditate for five minutes, maybe for ten minutes before you fall asleep. That's the time to meditate. So, you cannot

complain that you have no time to meditate. Waking... When you wake up in the morning or maybe in the middle of the night, wake up, what do you do? Mindful breathing or when you want to stretch your legs, stretch your arms or roll over to another side, you do that very mindfully. Sometimes you pull on your blanket again, do it mindfully. That is also the time to meditate. Maybe one minute, two minutes, five minutes. It doesn't matter how long or how short.

And... Speaking. Have you ever practiced talking meditation? People think that when you meditate, you do not talk. But it is very important in the beginning to meditate silently, until you develop very strong mindfulness. Then, you talk and still you can talk mindfully. Completely aware, completely mindfully, you can talk. You can even think mindfully. Mostly, thoughts are just coming and going without any control. But when you become very mindful, thoughts become very disciplined. You can think mindfully. You can stop thinking, when you want to. You can direct your thought to some object, some idea. So, speaking of when remaining silent... So now, I'm talking, you're silent. This is the time for you to meditate. You are listening and you are meditating also. Mindfully listening... Your mind is not wandering too much, thinking too much. You are here. You hear the sound. You hear the words. You know the meaning. So this is also the time to meditate, while listening while you are silent. So, I will give you some general idea.

“While experiencing a pleasant feeling...” So we experience as dozen feelings every now and then. You must know, “I am experiencing a pleasant feeling”, but this is just an instruction. You do not need to tell yourself, “I am experiencing pleasant feeling”. You are aware of that. You are with the feeling. You take notice of the feeling. To be aware is the most important thing, not talking to yourself. “While experiencing an unpleasant feeling, he knows ‘I am experiencing an unpleasant feeling’”. So, when you experience pleasant feeling, if you are not aware, greed comes. “Oh, I like it very much. I want it more.” So, when you are experiencing something unpleasant, you get upset. “Oh, I don’t like this. I want to get rid of it.” You might complain. You might blame another person. So, whatever you feel, whatever you experience, you are aware of that. So, it could be bodily or it could be mental. So, I want to make it very short to give you the general idea.

And here, “when a mind with greed arises, he knows, ‘this is a mind with greed’”. “This is a mind with greed.” Not my greed, not my mind. You have to pay close attention to it. You just watch the thought and see that this is a mind. Or this is a consciousness with greed. So, we have these greedy touch quite often. So, whenever they come, the best thing you can do is to pay attention, to take notice of it, or in a way to acknowledge it, like we did just a moment ago, we

acknowledge. We acknowledge the thought or this is it. This is greed. This is anger. This is pride. This is envy. This is jealousy. No matter what... Or this is mettā. This is loving-kindness. This is compassion. This is sadness. Whatever happens, pay close attention and see the nature of it. First, you see the nature, its nature. So, it could be a wholesome or unwholesome. Even when you are meditating, sometime you feel very calm. You look into your mind and see this is calmness. When you are very mindful, you look at that and see that this is mindfulness. So, whatever happens, pay attention. Take notice of it. That is meditation. So, if you make it very simple, if somebody asks you what is meditation? Meditation is paying attention to whatever is arising, whatever is happening now. That is meditation. Very simple, paying attention, taking notice, acknowledging of whatever is happening in the body or in the mind, whether it is good or not. That is meditation. Very, very simple. If it can be just this simple, taking notice, paying attention, that is enough. That is the whole practice actually. Although the object might change, it might be bodily movement or bodily sensation, it might be a thought, a feeling, no matter what, pay attention. That is meditation. So, in the beginning, we take one object and develop very strong mindfulness. Slowly and slowly, you pay attention to everything happening in your body, in your mind, all day, throughout the day.

In the beginning, when you pay attention, you become

tense. It will take a lot of practice to become very relaxed and still mindful. It takes a long time. That is why I told you many times before (that) meditation itself can become very stressful. It can become very stressful. So, try your best to relax as much as possible. And first of all, pay attention to that relaxed feeling. Get used to that. So, you develop, being aware of this relaxed feeling. This is another feeling. It is another kind of vedana, another kind of sensation. This is just one of the sensations. So, when you get used to being relaxed, it is better than to move on to other things. So, no matter how your relax become, more or less there will be some stress. It is impossible or almost impossible not to have any tension in the body. But sometimes when you develop very strong samadhi, your mind goes beyond the body, which is hard to talk about. Only when you have experienced it, you will know it. You do not feel your body anymore. You do not feel any sensation in you. All you can be aware of is your mind and it is very calm and peaceful. You are only aware of this calm and peaceful.

I received two letters today that another one is from an elder daughter. She said, "every day I spend some time in my spiritual world" and she talked about it before too. So, I understand what she is talking about. In that spiritual world, mostly you feel your own mind. In that world, there is no money anymore, no job anymore, no worries, no case, nobody anymore.

You are not a man or woman anymore. So, if you can tune into that state, you feel free, totally free. But it takes a long time to practice. So, if you cannot do that now, don't be discouraged. It might take a few years to do that. But if you practice intensely every day and night without doing anything else, you can develop very quickly. But even though you cannot practice that intensively, if you keep practicing, it will develop, slowly. It takes a long time to get used to doing something. It needs a lot of practice, like say for example, to play golf. People practice it for hours and hours in the hot sun, hours and hours, every day practicing, sometimes 2 or 3 day a week. Many, many hours just to put a little ball into the hole. Very important to put a little ball into the hole. Why do people do that? Because they like doing that. So, if you like meditating, not a problem for you. But if you don't like meditating and you just want the result, it's very frustrating to meditate. So, if you like doing it, if you enjoy doing it, then you get better results. But keep doing it. There is nothing that you can do for yourself. It is the best gift you can give to yourself.

So, I spend a lot of time today, and I don't want to spend all the time without giving you any time to meditate. So let's meditate for about half an hour now. Very simple. I am glad that you, all of you, to come again and again. Because then only I can add some details. Otherwise, very difficult to give you a bigger picture. So don't be a beginner all the time. Be a

graduate very soon. So, let's meditate.

Sit as you like, but make yourself very comfortable. And (if) you are not used to sitting like this, you can go and lean on the wall. Take your cushion. Put it very close to the wall and make yourself comfortable.

But as you get used to doing it, it's better not to lean on anything at all. But for the beginner, it's okay, you can sit in a chair.

Make yourself very comfortable.

If you can, keep your back straight. Because that makes it very easier to breathe.

And keep your head also, relaxed and straight.

Not make yourself tight. And hands, also you can keep your hands on your knees like this. Just let it rest on your knees, like this with your palms downward. Or you can do like this too. It's very relaxing if you keep like this.

If you can keep your fingers relaxed, you can relax your brain too. And keep your arms and fingers and shoulders relaxed. Just let go. Just let go the whole body, except your back. Just to keep your posture, just to maintain your posture and relax your eyes, your forehead, your cheeks, your jaws, lips, tongue,

throat, your chest, your tummy, your back and your legs. So, I talked about these things slowly in detail before. So, I am going very quickly. I hope you understand.

So, relax your whole body, especially your face and your hands. Very important these days. Because in our brain, there are bigger areas for hands and face than any part of the body. So, if you can keep your face relaxed, eyes and lips and jaws and if you can keep your hands relaxed, your brain and also your mind becomes relaxed. And then, breath deeply, mindfully. Pay attention to the air coming in, pay attention to the air going out. Feel the air. And then, every now and then, check yourself if you are becoming tense: your face, your shoulders, your arms, your back, the whole body. So, let's begin now. And, I'll ring the bell, when it is time to stop.