

Absolute truth and Conventional truth

I have the honor to present my respect to Pra Rattana Trai. May the happiness and progression in Dham-ma be yours, to those who follow his teaching. I would like to take this opportunity to present Dhamma according to the word that Buddha himself has taught. For a better understanding and progress in practising.

Practice meditation is an action. Action in our mind means being aware of our knowing the truth. We call it doing meditation or being aware of or having concentration or having wisdom. This means meditation. The manner that we do in order to get rid of trouble is **insight meditation**. If we do not reach insight meditation, we will not be able to get rid of trouble completely. To practice **concentration meditation** brings happiness and peace. But this happiness is temporarily. When concentration decreases, the trouble increases. Passion can occur and passion causes trouble. Concentration can only hide away, but cannot get rid of passion. We call it “**Wi kam pa na pra han**” Most people want to find peace, because it brings happiness. Peace from concentration is deep happiness. It is different from other happiness in this world, which we gain from pleasure of touching, seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling. All passion in this world can bring trouble later.

When we know meditation, we have found peace and like it. It is fine. It's different from other feelings that we experience by seeing, tasting, smelling, hearing, touching, etc.,

Even with us who just start practising as a beginner. We experience happiness when we start. We may feel nice and are longing for this peace. We want to stay with this happiness. The peace which occurs from a practising **concentration meditation** is like we take medicine to stop the pain. It is a quick result. We calm down and we can see the result. When we have pain, we take a medicine. We feel happy, pain is released. Medicine effects only for a period of time. When the power of medicine is expired, the pain will occur again. Anyhow it is quick result effect, but for a short term. Concentration meditation has the

same effect as taking medicine to stop pain. When we approach the status of being calm, we have good concentration. Passion is covered up. We call it “**Wi kam pa na pra han**”. Passion is covered up for a long time.

Insight meditation is like taking a set of medicine in the healing process. It is not a quick result. It takes time. It is the same as practising insight meditation. It is not quick. We do not find happiness at once, do not find peace immediately, as we expect. This is the obstacle to prevent us from going on doing insight meditation. We have to go on practising calmly till approaching a status of good concentration. When we approach that status, we feel happy and satisfied, and calm. We do not get more progress, because we want to have peace. The feeling need is a passion, which becomes an obstacle. The passion prevents the mind to become peaceful. In this way we who want to have peace, must make up our mind, not wanting to have peace. Mind does not want any peace, just practice. We should go on practising regularly. Then the mind will calm down by itself. We have to understand this process of insight meditation first.

In practising insight meditation, consciousness has to be aware of the feeling that occurs at that moment. What is this object or this feeling? We first have to be clear at this point. We should understand about this object first. How does this feeling look like? The feeling which occurs in insight meditation or the basic feeling of practising meditation. What is it? How is it? We have to know its meaning by heart. The feeling of insight meditation is a real feeling. In practising meditation, the consciousness has to observe the real feeling. Consciousness observes directly at the absolute truth. Touching an absolute truth, if not, it is not insight meditation, so we cannot get wisdom.

What is absolute truth? It is an object that has always been there in the nature. It is something, which already existed. It is always there. We feel direct the nature status. To feel the nature, the feeling that really exists. This is observing the reality. We can divide feelings into 2 types.

1. Feeling at **Absolute truth** or **Poramad**. This is a **real feeling** based on a real status.
2. Feeling at **Conventional truth** or **Banyat**. This is the feeling that can be **named** as what and what. We can describe them by a **form**. We can imagine their **shape**. This object people give a name or create a name. It is not real. People have valued it.

These feelings that appear are divided into

- Poramad** or absolute truth or real truth .and
- Banyat** or conventional truth.

Absolute truths are:

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| 1. Colour: an object that appears to the eyes | Ru pa rom |
| 2. Sound: “ “ ears | Sat ta rom |
| 3. Smell: “ “ nose | Kan ta rom |
| 4. Taste: “ “ tongue | Ra sa rom |
| 5. Cool, Warm:” “ body | Pote ta pa rom |
| Soft, Hard, | |
| Tension, Loose | |

The feeling that is touched through mind channel, is called

Tammalom. Any feeling that comes through mind channel or manotawan is called Tam ma rom. Tam ma rom feelings are :

1. Jid
2. Jet-sik or mind substance
3. Pra sa ta roop or Clear object. There are 5 clear objects such as eyes-nerves, ear-nerves, nose-nerves, tongue-nerves and body-nerves.

4. Sukum ma roop. Delicate object or Su kum ma roop. Such as male, female, life, heart.

5. Nip – Pan.

6. Tammalom. This is Banyat, but Tammalom can be Poramad, can also be Ban yat.

Banyat divided into 2 types:

1. Sat ta ban yat is object, which can be described by name.
2. Hat ta ban yat is object, which can be described by meaning, form or shape.

Ban yat also means objects that appear to the mind. We call them Tam ma rom, the objects, which appear through the mind channel.

That's all, all subjects in this universe. We can classify as above and divide them into 6 assortments.

1. Ru-pa-rom : colour
2. Sa-ta-rom : noise
3. Kan-ta-rom: smell
4. Ra-sa-rom: taste

5. Pote-ta-pa-rom: touch

6. Tam-ma-rom

Color, noise, smell, taste, cold, warm, soft, hard, tense, loose, and Tammarom. “Tammarom” there are a lot of it. Why do we say that everything in the mind is Tam ma rom? Because the mind can touch feelings that appear to the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body. But we cannot use the eye to see the mind, use the ear to hear the mind, use the tongue to taste the mind, use the body to feel the mind. The mind can feel the feeling appears inside the mind itself. We use the mind to know the mind or the mind feels the mind. We cannot use the eyes to see the mind. So in practice, it does not mean that we can see the mind as something round or a ball or color or light. It is not like that.

The mind is not color.

The mind is not noise.

The mind is not smell.

The mind is not taste.

The mind is not cool warm, tension, no tension, hard, soft.

The mind is Tam ma rom.

Tam ma rom is a feeling that occurs through the mind channel. We know feelings through the mind. The mind knows that the mind feels something. We can say that the mind is very special. Other feelings are Ru-pa-rom, this means all colors. Color can only be an appearance to be felt, to be recognized. But colour itself is not able to know anything. The voice itself is not able to know anything.

It can neither know any feeling. We call these as a body object or a form (Rup-pa-tam). Smell is also called object, because it has no feeling but it can be felt. Taste can be feeling, but has no own feeling. Taste is classified as Ru-pa-tam. These five feelings, Ru-pa-rom, Sa-ta-rom, Kan-ta-rom, Ra-sa-rom, Pote-ta-pa . All are Ru-pa-tam objects.

Colour, noise, smell, taste, Pote-ta-pa are Ru-pa-tam. They appear and they disappear. We can feel them. They appear as feelings only. Feelings are objects that the mind can feel. But Tam-ma-rom is an **observer or knower**, at the same moment, the mind has a feeling, but at that same moment the mind also acts as the observer; Observer knows, that there is a feeling in the mind channel.

Jet-Sik is something that occurs in the mind. So when the mind observes the feelings, Jet-sik also observes the feeling, because both are mixtures. The mind appears, Jet-Sik also appears, the mind appears to the eyes. Jet-sik also appears to the eyes. The mind appears in the heart, Jet Sik also appears in the heart. It occurs at the same time together, because the mind and Jet-sik are natures, which have an ability to know feelings.. We name it as **Nam ma tam**. When we say the mind knows the mind. How this looks like? At the moment that we see an object, that moment the mind is working. The conscious observes or knows the situation of seeing. This we call the mind knows the mind.

Because awareness knows the appearance of seeing. This manner is the mind knows the mind. Hear is in the mind. Awareness knows the appearance of hearing, we also call this appearance as the mind knows the mind. When we think, our awareness observes the manner of thinking, the thought is inside the mind. Observing the thought, this moment is called the mind knows the mind. The mind can also be the feeling, can also be the observer, who knows what is happening.

Jet sik is the subject that mixes in the mind. For example : anger, eager, wrong believing also are feelings, but these objects can also act as the observer who knows the feelings.

Pra sa ta roep also can be noticed through the mind channel. The mind feels all feelings. We also know **Nipparn** through the mind channel. Nipparn may not be seen, be heard. Nipparn can be known by heart. The way that feeling occurs in the mind channel, is different from the feeling occurring through eyes or ears.

In classifying an absolute and a conventional truth, we can classify them as follows :

- Absolute truth such as mind, jet-sik, pra sa ta roep, su kum ma roop, nipparn.
- Conventional truth: objects that can be described by name, language, meaning, form.

Meditation means a manner that awareness notices feelings.

Those feelings can be an absolute truth either or conventional truth: such as colour, noise, smell, taste, thought, like, dislike, peaceful, not peaceful. These mentioned feelings are absolute truths or real feelings. This is a natural feeling. Everyone who speaks different languages can

feel the same. We can practice insight meditation better, if we understand what an absolute truth is.

When practising meditation, it is possible to remember some names by heart. This is observing a conventional truth. Some moments the mind observes the feelings by calling a name. Some moments the mind observes the object by feelings.

For example, the moment that mind feels tension at the knee. This is observing the absolute truth that occurs. But if the mind imagines further to see how the knee looks like, this picture of a knee is a conventional feeling.

In fact, when we know the tension of the body, we also know the movement of the body. This is reorganization of an absolute truth appearance. But the mind can move further. The mind imagines a shape, of a leg, when we feel pain. The object is inventive in mind. This manner means the mind is observing conventional truth. If we understand this point we are doing insight meditation. We get wisdom.

Absolute truths are:

Feeling cool, warm, soft, hard, tension, loose.

Hearing

Seeing

The mind is moving very quick. During hearing the mind can produce a name. The mind remembers the voice. That is a voice of a dog.,etc. If a voice is familiar, the mind will recognize it. The mind can give a name, realize a name of persons, imagine the face of a person. These are all invented. These are conventional truths. In other way: no matter of whose name, person or animal comes up, the mind knows only that. It is a voice. It is a manner of hearing. This is noticing an absolute truth.

During listening to Dhamma, the awareness observes a manner of hearing without translating the meaning of talking. We may not

understand what it is about. At that moment of hearing, mind observes the status of hearing. At the other moment, the mind also translates the meaning of Dhamma. In this way, the mind is switching from observing absolute truth to the status of hearing. The mind switches to status of translating into a meaning of words. Knowing absolute truth and knowing conventional truth are occurring after each other. If the mind has experience, the mind can switch very fast. Awareness knows the meaning, then it notices the fact of hearing. Go to the meaning then observes the hearing. The mind is able to understand the story and also knows the status of hearing.

The moment that the mind is translating words, it imagines a meaning. This is Ban yat. That moment the mind follows the meaning. This is noticing conventional truth. When the knower knows the status of hearing, it is observing absolute truth. This is called knowing por ra mad. Every moment poramad is occurring continuously. We should be able to know this appearance. This is insight meditation when the mind is thinking, awareness knows the thought. This action is **insight meditation**. At another moment that mind translates the meaning of words. That moment is observing Ban yat. .

If we do not practise, the awareness gets used to ban yat. Awareness is never be trained to observe poramad. The mind always goes to meaning, story, name. The mind never touches the real feeling. This manner is not correct. The mind stays with feeling of trouble, worry, angry. At the moment that awareness knows poramad passion is decreasing. Passion can occur only when the mind gives meaning. Mind feels like, dislike. If the mind stays with “poramad”, the mind is clean. There is no passion. That is the reason that when we meditate we feel light, happy, peaceful. Releasing from trouble. Too much thinking can cause trouble in mind. We can practise meditation in daily life. The mind always touches many different statuses. Such as see, hear, smell. All kinds of feeling occur at every moment. We may have passion. We experience the feeling of anger, like, dislike. One mood appears after each other, if we do not practise meditation.

Start now, use meditation in daily life. First step: Knower notices poramad or the absolute truth that occurs. (In Thai word we use the word knower, we say “knower observes poramad”) This step is insight meditation. The manner of noticing at the body, feeling cool, warm, soft, hard, tense, loose, comfortable, uncomfortable, pain. Notice only this feeling.

At eye- channel we see
 At ear- channel we hear
 At nose- channel we smell
 At tongue- channel we taste
 Study about this. Get used to it.

Through the mind channel, we know the thought, the liking, the disliking. Go on noticing until the feeling comes automatically. For the beginner, the mind always runs to all channels. The mind goes to the leg, the mind goes to the body, and the mind goes to the eyes. The mind goes to ears, nose, tongue. When we get used to all different types of feelings, the practice can be more automatic. Be still, notice what is coming up.

When we need power, we need practice to gain power. The more training, the more experience. The one who is advanced in meditation can experience peace inside. Even at some moments, we are not trying to notice a feeling, there will be a link to receive the appearance of feeling by itself. This we call automatic. Awareness observes the feeling and links it between the body and the mind. When we pay attention to only one spot of the body, the imagination may go further. If we also notice the mind, we will experience that the awareness does not go too far in meaning.

Observe the feeling , observe the mind
 Observe the hearing, observe the mind
 Observe the smelling, observe the mind

Always come back to observe the mind: This is insight meditation. (In Thai word we use the word “know” instead of observe)

When the mind imagines into a form, shape, name this is ban yat. The awareness observes the appearance which touches the mind channel. The knower knows the thought, this is action of thinking and

reminding. When awareness notices a thought, a thinking idea appears. Just realize it. Instead of go deeper in that thinking idea, awareness can also leave that subject of thinking and come back to the status of seeing the idea of thinking. This we call observing Por ra mad. When awareness leaves the thought and comes back to Poramad, this way the status of composing a story will be interrupted. That is why, if we are able to be aware of the mind, we will have progress in meditation. We will be able to see the existing of the nature in a very delicate way. In practising meditation we should know the mind. We should observe the mind. We observe the knower, we observe the status of knowing. We know the feeling that occurs in the mind. Sometimes meditator enters a status of deep concentration. We feel very light through the whole body. We nearly do not feel the existing of the body. We do not feel the breath. Rhythm of breath. Rhythm of heart beat is very fine. At this status, if we are not observing the feeling in the mind neither are observing the movement of the body, we can feel very empty. In fact there is no movement of the body but the mind is still active. The mind thinks, the mind feels, the feeling of happiness comes up. All kind of feelings can appear and disappear. Appear and disappear

Pain appears and disappears
 Happiness appears and disappears
 Uncomfortableness appears and disappears
 Comfort appears and disappears
 Satisfaction appears and disappears
 Doubt appears and disappears

If awareness does not observe feelings in the mind, we may feel very empty. Still and quiet. This is no progression. No matter how long is the time past, there is no progression, for the one who can feel the mind, one will realize that there is a status. The mind is an observer. There is the feeling of thinking, liking, disliking, peace, happiness. We also realize the status of appearing and disappearing, in knowing the mind object. Sometimes the mind observes ban yat. Sometimes the mind observes poramad. Start by listening first. May be we may not

understand that much for the first time. But practise, and experience in practising. Learn by experience of practice.

I will give one example of meditation, in hearing. We understand that hearing is only a status of noise touching the ear. Noise appears and noise disappears. It is out of control .It appears, to be disappeared. Smelling, tasting, touching, and thinking also happen in the same manner. The aim of practising meditations is to find out that all feelings are not you, neither yourself. It does not belong to us. We can not control this status. Practice until we realize that all feelings appear and disappear by itself. It is out of control.

When we understand this truth, we are doing **insight meditation**. This understanding is not too difficult to understand. Do not wait to start. Practise now.

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This Dhamma was presented by Prakrukrasemtammattat.

WatMahaeyong. during 8 – 16 May 2004.

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