Buddha's Core Teachings

The Buddha-Dharma Chart

How to Read This Chart

Core topics:
- 3 Refuges
- 4 Noble Truths
- The 3 Characteristics
- The 5 Aggregates
- The 12 Links
- Noble 8-fold Path
- Nirvana (Nibbāna)
- Parinirvana

Sub topics:
- Practice Methods & Techniques

Bold Topic in English
/ Topic in Pali
( ) Other terms used
Regular Descriptive information
Italic Descriptive information connecting topics
* *Italic* References another part of the chart
Underline Links to online resources

Links and branches of information
Larger groups of related topics
Groups of items relating to one topic
Shows how an item leads to a related topic

Background Info, Terms of Use, & File Links

Hi, I'm Joe Rucker and I created this Dharma Chart. It's a work in progress. As I learn Dharma, this chart changes, expands, and is refined.

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Qualities (characteristics); **the Blessed One is** / Itipi so bhagavā:
- **Worthy (fully liberated)** / Arahaṃ
- **Fully-self-enlightened** / Sammā-sam-buddho
- **Perfect in true knowledge (of causality and conditions) and moral conduct** / Vijjā-caraṇa-sampanno
- **Well-gone one (completed noble path to Nirvana)** / Sugato
- **World-knower (and the conditioned arising of beings within them)** / Loka-vidū
- **Supreme tamer of persons (ultimate ability to teach others the way to Nirvana)** / Anuttaro Purisa-damma-sārathi
- **Teacher of Devas and humans** / Satthā Deva-manussānaṃ
- **Awakened (fully enlightened & able to teach others the 4 Noble Truths)** / Buddho
- **Blessed (worthy of veneration, respect, and is a source of protection)** / Bhagavā

3 Refuges

The 3 Refuges / Ti-saraṇa
(triple gem / ti-ratana)
Provides guidance and direction for life

- **Buddha** (enlightened teacher) Referred to himself as the "Tathāgata"
- **Dharma** / Dhamma (the teaching on how life works) Natural laws about the way to end stress & suffering
- **Sangha** / Saṅgha (community of practitioners)

Noble Sangha / Ariya
- **Stream-enterers** / Sotāpanna
- **Once-returners** / Sakadāgāmī
- **Non-returners** / Anāgāmī
- **Fully Enlightened** / Arahant

Monastics (renunciants) / Pabbajita
- **Nuns** / Bhikkhunī
- **Monks** / Bhikkhu
- **Novice** Nuns / Sāmaṇerī
- **Novice** Monks / Sāmaṇera

Lay Practitioners
- **Female Practitioner** / Upāsikā
- **Male Practitioner** / Upāsaka

4 Noble Truths

The 4 Noble Truths / Cattāri Ariya-saccāni
(4 ennobling truths)

Dukkha
(stress, suffering, dissatisfaction, unease, discontentment)
Dukkha is to be **(fully understood, known)** / pariññeyya, through **insight** / vipassanā
* *See 16 Steps of Ānāpāna-sati in 4 Tetrads*

- **Naturally Occurring** / Dukkha-dukkha (common dukkha)(ordinary dukkha) Stress of stress
  - **Birth** / Jāti
  - **Aging** / Jarā
  - **Illness** / Vyādhi
  - **Death** / Maraṇa
  - **Sorrow** / Soka
  - **Lamentation** (grief) / Parideva
  - **Pain** / Dukkha
  - **Distress** (anxiety) / Domanassa
  - **Despair** / Upāyāsa
  - **Union with the displeasing** / Appiyehi sampayogo
  - **Separation from the pleasing** / Piyehi vippayogo
  - **Not getting what you want or desire** / Yampicchaṁ na labhati
- **Change** / Vipariṇāma-dukkha — Stress of being dependent and compounded
  - **Clinging to the impermanent** / Anicca upādāna
- **Conditioned Existence** / Saṅkhāra-dukkha (mind-made dukkha) All-pervasive subtle dissatisfaction arising from aversion to and/or denial of the 3 Characteristics of Existence, and our clinging to, attachment to, grasping after, and/or identification with The 5 Aggregates

Origin of Dukkha / Dukkha-Samudaya
(cause of stress)(unhealthy craving)
The origin of Dukkha is to be **abandoned** / pahātabba, through **dispassion** / virāga, developed from **insight** / vipassanā
* *See 16 Steps of Ānāpāna-sati in 4 Tetrads*

- **Craving** / Taṇhā (thirst or hunger – for satisfaction from the conditioned world) It's a passion and delight in, and fascination with, the volitional fabrications (formations) / saṅkhārā that fuel clinging and becoming (the self-centering process).
  - **for sensual pleasure** / Kāma-taṇhā (for sense experiences)
  - **for existence** / Bhava-taṇhā (for becoming or existence)
  - **for non-existence** / Vibhava-taṇhā (for escaping existence)
- **The 3 Defilements (fires)** / Tiṇi Aggī (vices)(unwholesome roots)(the three poisons)
  - **Greed** / Lobha (attachment, desire, passion, hoarding, pride, jealousy) Chasing unnecessary pleasures
  - **Hatred** / Dosa (aversion, anger) Avoiding necessary discomforts
  - **Delusion** / Moha (confusion, lack of discernment) Confusing the essential with the unessential

Cessation of Dukkha / Dukkha-Nirodha
(cure of stress)(non-arising of Dukkha)
The cessation of Dukkha is to be **directly experienced (realized)** / sacchikātabba, due to abandoning its cause
* *See Process of Awakening: Awakening / Bodhi*

The 3 Characteristics

The 3 Characteristics of Conditioned Existence / Tilakkhaṇa
(3 signs of existence)(3 marks of existence)
Perceptions to apply when we need to weaken the passion for things that pull us off the path. Note: Only Non-Self can be applied to Nirvana.

- **Impermanence** / Anicca (inconstancy)
- **Unsatisfactoriness** / Dukkha
- **Non-Self** / Anattā (coreless)(impersonality)(ownerlessness) There's no lasting, controlling self in what is conditioned and composite. All is process. These experiences are not mine, not I (me), not my self. Dukkha's impersonal—not 'my' suffering.
  - **Emptiness** / Suññatā (voidness) All phenomena is empty of a permanent controller, an independent self.

The 5 Aggregates

The 5 Aggregates We Cling To / Pañcakkhandhā
(the 5 aggregates of experience subject to clinging)
When this is understood, you realize "self" is a process, so our experience is impersonal. This allows us to transcend the 8 Worldly Conditions.

In summary, Dukkha is clinging to:
- **Form** / Rūpa — Matter as experienced internally and externally
  - **4 Aspects** / Catudhātu (4 elements)
    - **Solidity (weight)** / Paṭhavī-dhātu (earth)
    - **Fluidity (cohesion)** / Āpo-dhātu (water)
    - **Temperature (energy)** / Vāyo-dhātu (fire)
    - **Mobility (gasses)** / Tejo-dhātu (wind)
- **Feeling Tones** / Vedanā (feeling) **see 12 Links of Dependent Origination*
- **Perceptions** / Saññā (labels)(recognition)(discrimination)
- **Fabrications (formations)** / Saṅkhāra (emotions & thoughts)(mental-volitional fabrications)
- **Sense-based Consciousness** / Viññāṇa (discernment)(moment-to-moment awareness) **see 12 Links of Dependent Origination*

The 12 Links

The 12 Links of Dependent Origination / Paṭicca Samuppāda
(co-arising)(conditioned genesis)(dependent arising)
It's how the 5 Aggregates function to form Samsara. It's the process by which we make our Dukkha.
Note: Each of the 12 both conditions and gives rise to the next in the list.

- **Ignorance** / Avijjā — of how to apply 4 noble truths
- **Karmic Fabrications (formations)** / Saṅkhārā — All intentional activities and their conditioned momentum
  - **Karma** / Kamma **See Right View*
- **Sense-based Consciousness** / Viññāṇa — arising from the 6 senses & the six objects in three Feeling Tones
  - **6 Sense Bases and their Objects** / Saḷ-āyatana — Give rise to the 6 consciousnesses
- **Mentality & Materiality (name & form)** / Nāma-rūpa (mind & body) **see The 5 Aggregates*
- **6 senses** / Saḷ-āyatana
- **Contact - between object and the 6 senses** / Phassa — From contact arises perceptions / saññā, which identify and label it.
- **Feeling Tones** / Vedanā (feeling) Pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral (neither pleasant nor unpleasant)
- **Craving** / Taṇhā **see Origin of Dukkha*
- **Clinging** / Upādāna (grasping)(attachment) Holding onto (feeding on) sensuality, habits and practices, views, and doctrines of the self (self-making, selfing).
- **Becoming** / Bhava — Actions following old habits. Because a being is not absolute, it is flux.
- **Birth** / Jāti — Birth and/or rebirth as an identity, resulting in aversion to aging and death
- **Aging, Illness, & Death** / Jarā-maraṇa — "Jarā-maraṇa" is short for items of ordinary dukkha: * *See Dukkha-dukkha*

Senses: / Cha-indriyāni	Sense Objects: / Bāhirāni saḷ-āyatanāni	Sense Consciousnesses: / Cha-viññāṇāni
Eye (visual organ) / Cakkhu	**Form (visible objects)** / Rūpa	**Eye-consciousness (seeing)** / Cakkhu-viññāṇa
Ear (auditory organ) / Sota	**Sound (audible objects)** / Sadda	**Ear-consciousness (hearing)** / Sota-viññāṇa
Nose (olfactory organ) / Ghāna	**Smell (olfactory objects)** / Gandha	**Nose-consciousness (smelling)** / Ghāna-viññāṇa
Tongue (gustatory organ) / Jivhā	**Taste (gustatory objects)** / Rasa	**Tongue-consciousness (tasting)** / Jivhā-viññāṇa
Body (tactile organ) / Kāya	**Tangible objects (textures, temperatures, etc.)** / Phoṭṭhabba	**Body-consciousness (touching)** / Kāya-viññāṇa
Mind (mental faculty) / Mano	**Mental objects (thoughts, ideas, emotions)** / Dhammā	**Mind-consciousness (mental cognition)** / Mano-viññāṇa

Mentality / Nāma, listed 4th In The 12 Links, consists of:
- **Feeling Tones** / Vedanā
- **Perceptions** / Saññā
- **Moment-to-moment volitional impulse** / Cetanā
- **Contact - between object and the 6 senses** / Phassa
- **Attention** / Manasikāra

Cycle of Rebirth (wandering-on) / Samsāra
(round of rebirth / saṃsāra-vaṭṭa)
It's life lived as: habits, compulsions, impulses, urges, addictions, and as a hostage to unconscious desires, needs, and impulses. It is the repeating cycle of conditioned existence as birth, life, death and rebirth.

Rebirth / Punabbhava
(repeated becoming)(repeated existence)
When you reify non-things and claim you exist as a separate ego personality.
It is craving / taṇhā that brings about rounds of rebirth. This is not reincarnation.

Realms of Existence / Bhava / Loka
(states of becoming and planes of existence)
Continuum of consciousness from one state of mind into another. Note:
- This is not reincarnation
- Each are impermanent states of mind

- **Sensual Realm** / Kāma-loka (desire realm)
  - **Heavenly Realms** / Deva-loka (heavenly mind)(blissful mind)(devas)(6 levels of celestial beings)
  - **Human Realm** / Manussa-loka (human mind)
  - **Ego Realm** / Asura-loka (egocentric mind)(asuras)(titans or demons)
  - **Animal Realm** / Tiracchāna-loka (animal mind)
  - **Unsatisfiable Realm** / Peta-loka (hungry ghost mind)(pretas)
  - **Hell Realms** / Niraya-loka (rage mind)(hell beings)(hell realm)
- **Fine-Material Realm** / Rūpa-loka (form realm)
- **Immaterial Realm** / Arūpa-loka (formless realm) **See Tranquility Meditation and The 4 Immaterial States*

Noble 8-fold Path

The Noble 8-fold path leading to cessation of Dukkha / Ariyo Aṭṭhaṅgiko Maggo Dukkha-nirodha-gāminī-paṭipadā
The path leading to the cessation of Dukkha is to be **cultivated** / bhāvetabba

Overall progression of the path:
1. Ethics as foundation (Sīla)
2. Cultivate calm (breath or Metta, etc.)
3. Gather and unify the mind (Jhāna)
4. Apply insight (Vipassanā)
5. Deepen understanding and how one perceives (Sammā-diṭṭhi)
6. Realizing liberation (Nibbāna)

(Right = wholesome, skillful, or harmonious)

Wisdom / Paññā (wisdom training)

View

Right View / Sammā-diṭṭhi
(right understanding)
Deepens through Insight / Vipassanā

Mundane Right View / Lokiya-sammā-diṭṭhi
Study and practice of **ordinary people (worldlings)** / puthujjana. Their understanding is a conceptual one, used as preparation for insight. This type of view is also used by **noble learners** / sekha, for day-to-day practice, but their understanding is one of direct experience from moments of insight and awakening.

- **Karma & Results** / Kamma-vipāka (moral causality)(action / kamma) Action follows intention, realized through speech, action, and livelihood. What we think, say, and do changes the course of our lives.
  - **Wholesome and Unwholesome Actions** / Kusala ca Akusala Kamma — Intentional action is done through thought, speech, or body. It gives results now or later, or both. Wholesome actions create conditions for positive results to arise, and likewise for unwholesome actions and their negative results.
    - **Merit** / Puñña — There is a benefit to you and others from wholesome actions.
      - *You can use Merit as a constructive use of intentional action (Karma)*
    - **Gratitude (felt & expressed)** / Kataññū-katavedī — Appreciation to those who have helped us, such as parents, teachers, spiritual friends / kalyāṇamitta, etc. We recognize how we've benefited as a result of other people's wholesome actions.
  - **The 3 False Views** / Ti-micchā-diṭṭhi — These leave you defenseless and defeated, and lead you away from taking responsibility for your actions and your liberation.
    - **Destiny** / Pubbe-kata-hetu (past-action determinism)(predetermined)
    - **Divine will** / Issara-nimmāna-hetu (theistic determinism)(direction or intervention)
    - **Chance** / Ahetu-appaccaya (indeterminism or accidentalism)(random)(chaos)
- **Rebirth and the Realms of Existence** / Punabbhava ca Loka **see 12 Links of Dependent Origination*
- **Dependent Origination** / Paṭicca Samuppāda **see 12 Links of Dependent Origination*
- **Conditioned Existence** / Saṅkhāra-dukkha **See Dukkha*
- **The 4 Noble Truths** / Cattāri Ariyasaccāni — Confidence in the Buddha, Dharma, Saṅgha, and in the wise who live and teach in accordance with Dharma. **See Dharma*

Mundane understanding leads to the outcome, the supramundane

Supramundane Right View / Lokuttara-sammā-diṭṭhi
(penetrative insight)(liberating view)
The understanding (view) that arises during a **moment of path consciousness** / magga-citta, where there's direct insight into the 4 Noble Truths and direct realization that they actually lead to liberation by our own efforts.

- **Right Knowledge** (gnosis) / Sammā-ñāṇa — Seeing the Dharma in real time, how Dukkha comes from fabricating and how abandoning its cause leads to liberation. And knowing both how and when this occurs.
  - **Direct insight into the 4 Noble Truths** / cattāri ariya-saccāni yathā-bhūta-ñāṇa-dassana
  - **Experiential Knowledge of the Three Characteristics** / anicca-dukkha-anattā-ñāṇa (tilakkhaṇa-ñāṇa)
  - **Insight into Dependent Origination** / paṭicca-samuppāda-ñāṇa-dassana
  - **Path Knowledge and Fruition Knowledge** / magga-ñāṇa, phala-ñāṇa — Knowing the moment that the Third Noble Truth is realized in real time
- **Right Liberation** / Sammā-vimutti (right release)
  - **The knowledge realizing Nirvana as the unconditioned reality** / nibbāna-sacchikiriyā-ñāṇa (asaṅkhata-dhamma-sacchikiriyā-ñāṇa) — Experiencing the moment that the Third Noble Truth is realized in real time

Both are only realized and understood at the moment of awakening / bodhi
* *See The Noble 8-fold Path results in: 9th and 10th path elements*

Intention

Right Intention / Sammā-saṅkappa
(right resolve)(right attitude)
(right thought)(right aspiration)
- **toward renunciation** / Nekkhamma-saṅkappa
- **toward goodwill** / Avyāpāda-saṅkappa
- **toward compassion or harmlessness** / Avihiṁsā-saṅkappa

Ethics / Sīla (ethics training) (virtue) (morality)

Speech

The 5 Precepts (guidelines) are used to practice basic ethics. It connects all of Right Action with the first part of Right Speech. This supports us by bringing calm to Right Contemplation

Right Speech / Sammā-vācā
(right communication)

Abstain from:	Foster:
False Speech / Musā	**Truthful** / Sacca
Divisive Speech / Pisuṇa (discord)(slander)	**Harmonious** / Samagga (gentle)(promote unity & reconciliation)
Harsh Speech / Pharusa (ill willed)(hateful)(abusive)	**Gentle** / Saṇha (kind)(affectionate)(goodwilled)
Idle Speech / Samphappalāpa — Inappropriate, frivolous, rambling, useless, unmindful, non-purposeful, distracting, gossip, showing off, speculation, excessive, and/or out of sync with the moment's needs, etc.	**Meaningful** / Attha (constructive)

Action

Right Action / Sammā-kammanta
* *See Merit in the "Practice Methods & Techniques" for the Acts of Merit*

Abstain from:
- **Killing** / Pāṇātipāta
- **Stealing** / Adinnādāna — Taking what is not freely given
- **Sexual misconduct** / Kāmesu micchācārā — Examples are sex with someone who:
  - Is under protection (under guardianship of parents or family, or in prison)
  - Is already committed to another person (married, domestic partners)
  - Has taken a religious vow of celibacy (ordained, monks, nuns, priests, etc.)
  - Is legally forbidden (underage persons or incest)
  - Has any sexual activity with you through being coerced, exploited, forced, manipulated, or taken advantage of

Livelihood

Right Livelihood / Sammā-ājīva
In general, abstain from work that causes harm or relies on deception, manipulation, or exploitation to obtain benefits from others.

Abstain from dealing in:
- **Weapons** / Sattha
- **Living Beings** / Satta — Examples: slavery, human trafficking, animal trade for slaughter
- **Meat** / Maṁsa — Especially from animals killed for sale
- **Intoxicants** / Majja — Or promoting intoxication
- **Poisons** / Visa

When practicing The 5 Precepts (guidelines), the 5th precept focuses on the abandoning of intoxicating oneself rather than abandoning the dealing in it as a livelihood.

Mental / Samādhi **Discipline** (mental training) (mental refinement) (meditation) (concentration aspect)

Effort

Right Effort / Sammā-vāyāma
Supports the meditative approaches

Making a persistent effort to:
- **Prevent (avoid) arising of unarisen unwholesome states** / Akusala-uppāda-anuppāda-vāyāma
- **Abandon (overcome) arisen unwholesome states** / Akusala-pahāna-vāyāma
- **Arouse (develop) unarisen wholesome states** / Kusala-uppāda-vāyāma
- **Maintain and refine (perfect) arisen wholesome states** / Kusala-bhāvanā-vāyāma

Mindfulness

Right Mindfulness / Sammā-sati
(right observing & remembering)
Sustains awareness in all meditative approaches.

4 Foundations of Mindfulness / Cattāro Satipaṭṭhānā

Maintain awareness, carefully observe, and recall repeatedly:
- **Contemplation of the body** / Kāya-anupassanā — Awareness of breathing, posture, actions, decay
- **Contemplation of feelings** / Vedanā-anupassanā — Awareness of pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral
- **Contemplation of the mind** / Citta-anupassanā — Awareness of mental states. Examples: distracted, concentrated
- **Contemplation of mind-objects** / Dhammā-anupassanā — Sometimes referred to as "dharmas". It's awareness of teachings: 5 Hindrances, 5 Aggregates, 6 Internal & External Sense-bases, 7 Factors of Awakening, and 4 Noble Truths
  - **The 5 Hindrances** / Pañca-Nīvaraṇāni
  - **The 5 Aggregates of our experience** / Pañca-kkhandhā **See Conditioned Existence*
  - **6 Sense Bases and their Objects** / Saḷ-āyatana — These give rise to the 6 consciousnesses * *see 12 Links of Dependent Origination, third link: Consciousness*
  - **7 Factors of Awakening** / Satta Bojjhaṅgā
  - **The 4 Noble Truths** / Cattāri Ariyasaccāni — It's insight into The 4 Noble Truths beyond mere knowledge. It's how they apply on a direct level. **See Dharma*

These are dharmas to observe but also show up as obstacles to Right Concentration:
- **Sensual Desire** / Kāmacchanda — Desire for sense pleasures or experiences derived from them, and any attachment to them
- **Ill Will** / Vyāpāda (Byāpāda) — Hatred, anger, aversion
- **Sleepiness & Lazyness** / Thīna-middha — (Sloth & Torpor) Mental sluggishness & physical or drowsiness
- **Restlessness & Worry** / Uddhacca-kukkucca — Agitation or anxiety
- **Skeptical Doubt of Dharma** / Vicikicchā — Doubt about the Buddha, Dharma, Saṅgha, any core truths, the path or its efficacy, or one's ability to follow it.

You can use the 5 Methods to overcome the 5 Hindrances

7 Factors of Awakening:
- **Mindfulness** / Sati — Unifies & Balances the other 6 factors
- **Investigation of Dharma** / Dhamma-vicaya; **Energy (persistence)** / Vīriya; **Joyful Energy (rapture)** / Pīti — Factors for energizing
- **Tranquility (relaxation)(serenity)** / Passaddhi; **Concentration** / Samādhi; **Equanimity** / Upekkhā — Factors for stilling energies

Concentration

Right Concentration / Sammā-samādhi
(immersion)(absorption)(collectedness)
(calm abiding)(stilling the mind)(unification)
A collected calm mind that culminates in Jhāna which is used to practice Insight / Vipassanā.

Tranquility Meditation / Samatha-bhavana
(cultivating calm)
Optional but highly effective ways used to achieve and strengthen Meditative Absorption / Jhāna

40 available methods, but here's the two most notable:
- **4 Sublime Abodes (for the Heart-Mind)** / Brahma-Vihāras (4 divine abodes)(4 immeasurables)(4 sublime abidings) (4 sublime attitudes) To be cultivated towards without holding back. Working towards a boundless expansion of positivity towards all beings.
  - **Practice expanding without limit in all directions:**
    - **Goodwill** / Mettā (loving-kindness)(friendliness)
    - **Compassion** / Karuṇā (harmlessness)
    - **Appreciative Joy** / Muditā (sympathetic joy)(empathetic joy)
    - **Equanimity** / Upekkhā (balanced awareness) It applies the other 3 sublime minds equally
      - **8 Worldly Conditions** / Aṭṭha-lokadhamma (8 vicissitudes) Equanimity allows us to remain unshaken by these vicissitudes.
        - **Transcend:**
        - **Gain and Loss** / Lābha ca Alābha
        - **Fame and Shame** / Yasa ca Ayasa
        - **Praise and Blame** / Paṇāma ca Ninda
        - **Pleasure and Pain** / Sukha ca Dukkha
  - *You can use the 4 Sublime Abodes to go to liberation*
- **Mindfulness of Breathing** / Ānāpāna-sati (keeping the breath in mind) Using the breath as a meditative guidepost while one calms the heart-mind by cultivating the factors for Meditative Absorption / Jhāna
  - **This meditation fulfills Right Mindfulness in two ways:**
    - * *see 4 Foundations of Mindfulness*
    - * *see7 Factors of Awakening*
  - *Develops into Jhāna, which leads to the ripening of insight, right knowledge and deliverance (liberation).*
  - *You can use the Mindfulness of Breathing to go to liberation*

Use a tranquility meditation to achieve Jhāna

Meditative Absorption (Immersion) / Jhāna
(unification of mind)(fine-material attainments)
Mental practices that change the state of consciousness so it's stable and deep enough to discern the real-time experience of being with clarity. These 4 stages of concentration are sometimes called the "form jhānas" or "material jhānas" / "rūpa-jhāna".

Each Jhāna progressively drops some of the "5 Jhāna Factors" / Pañca-jhānaṅgāni

1st Jhāna – Focused, Joy (delight) Pervading the Body
- **Initial** (applied) **Thought** / Vitakka
- **Sustained Thought** / Vicāra
- **Joyful Energy** (rapture) / Pīti
- **Happiness** (bliss) / Sukha
- **One-pointedness** (gathered-steady-awareness) / Ekaggatā

The hindrances are temporarily stopped (suppressed). One is detached from sensual pleasures and unwholesome thoughts.

2nd Jhāna – Collected, Drenched in Cool Joy (delight)
- **Joyful Energy** (rapture) / Pīti
- **Happiness** (bliss) / Sukha
- **One-pointedness** (Gathered-Steady-Awareness) / Ekaggatā

Vitakka & Vicāra drop away. Pīti & Sukha increases.

3rd Jhāna – Calm happiness
- **Happiness** (bliss) / Sukha
- **One-pointedness** (Gathered-Steady-Awareness) / Ekaggatā
- **Equanimity** / Upekkhā

Pīti fades; Sukha softens into calm contentment.

4th Jhāna – Attentive stillness (equanimity)(serenity)
- **One-pointedness** (gathered-steady-awareness) / Ekaggatā
- **Equanimity** / Upekkhā

Sukha becomes a neutral feeling. There's neither pain nor pleasure. One notices arising and passing away.

Description of the 5 Jhāna factors:
1. Vitakka - Directing the mind toward the object (placing the mind on the object)
2. Vicāra - Keeping attention on the object (staying focused on the object)
3. Pīti - Energized joy (refreshing tingles, waves, or surges of joy, of delight, uplift and interest)
4. Sukha - Comfortable mental ease (bliss)(happy and content)
5. Ekaggatā - Unified focus; deep mental unification (unifying)

Use Jhāna to practice Insight / Vipassanā

Optional: Use Jhāna to go into The 4 Immaterial States

The 4 Immaterial States / Arūpā āyatanā
(immaterial dimensions)(immaterial attainments)(immaterial realms)
(formless bases)(formless spheres)
These are 4 stages of concentration on the immaterial. Transcending bodily sensations, one enters the Dimension of Infinite Space. Each state (realm) is then transcended and one enters each successively. Sometimes these 4 states are called the "formless jhānas" / "arūpa-jhāna".

Optional deeper states to further stabilize meditation:
- **Boundless Space**
  - **Dimension of Infinite Space** / Ākāsānañca-āyatana (expansion, beyond body) Sometimes called the 5th Jhāna
- **Infinite Awareness (content fades, gaps widen)**
  - **Dimension of Infinite Consciousness** / Viññāṇañca-āyatana (expansive awareness) Sometimes called the 6th Jhāna
- **No Thing Remains**
  - **Dimension of No-thingness** / Ākiñcañña-āyatana (the quietude, from settling) Sometimes called the 7th Jhāna
- **Threshold of Knowing (bare awareness)**
  - **Dimension of Neither Perception nor Non-perception** / Nevasaññā-nāsaññā-āyatana (threshold of perception) Sometimes called the 8th Jhāna. It can help one prepare for the cessaton of Mental Fabrications (perception and feeling). * *See The Fabrications (formations)*

Use these Immaterial States to practice Insight / Vipassanā

Practice Methods & Techniques

Practice / Paṭipatti

10 Perfections / Dasa-pāramīyo
These are qualities and activities that take you to liberation, support you on your way there, and are cultivated (developed and refined) along the way.

Practice indefinitely, continually deepening:
- **Generosity** / Dāna-pāramī — Giving is good. It reduces **greed** / lobha. It's a practice that weakens attachments, strengthens ethics, and promotes goodwill.
- **Virtue** / Sīla-pāramī * *see Ethics / Sīla*
- **Renunciation** / Nekkhamma-pāramī — It's renouncing the passions for the **fabrications** / saṅkhārā. Letting go of craving for **sensual fabrications** / kāma-saṅkhārā, turning away from delight in **conditioned phenomena** / saṅkhata-dhamma, turning toward **disenchantment** / nibbidā and **cessation** / nirodha.
- **Wisdom** / Paññā-pāramī — It's understanding the Dharma, and applying discernment between wholesome and unwholesome actions. It's supported by penetrative insight into impermanence, Dukkha, and non-self. That's developed through skillful **(wise) reflection** / yoniso manasikāra. This understanding is guided by compassion.
- **Energy** / Viriya-pāramī — Note that this is different than **effort** /vāyāma. Effort is the initial work, and energy is the maintenance.
- **Patience** / Khanti-pāramī — Includes self-control, restraint, and tolerance.
- **Truthfulness** / Sacca-pāramī
- **Determination** / Adhiṭṭhāna-pāramī (resolve)
- **Goodwill** / Mettā-pāramī (koving-kindness)(friendliness)
- **Equanimity** / Upekkhā-pāramī (balanced awareness)

5 Precepts / Pañca-sīla
Guidelines used as a training for basic ethical safety. Provides support for the mental discipline.

Abstain from:
1. **Killing** / Pāṇātipāta
2. **Stealing** / Adinnādāna
3. **Sexual misconduct** / Kāmesu micchācārā
4. **False Speech** / Musāvādā
5. **Taking Intoxicants** / Majja

Acts of Merit / Puñña-kiriya-vatthu
(the three pillars of Dharma)
- **Generosity** / Dāna * *see 10 Perfections / Dasa-pāramīyo*
- **Virtue** / Sīla * *see Ethics / Sīla*
- **Heart-mind Cultivation** / Bhāvanā — Meditation and a dedication to those who benefit from it. * *for details, see Mental Discipline / Samādhi*

For many, this is a great starting point for their practice. Merit is fuel for the path, a groundwork for ethical action (conduct), and a solid foundation for spiritual work. It's also a great way to branch into the 10 Perfections.

10 Meritorious Deeds / Puñña-kiriya-vatthu
(10 bases of merit)
An expanded list of the Acts of Merit.
1. **Generosity** / Dāna (charity)
2. **Virtue** / Sīla (moral conduct)
3. **Heart-mind Cultivation** / Bhāvanā (meditation)
4. **Respect** / Apacāyana (reverence to those worthy of respect)
5. **Service in wholesome deeds** / Veyyāvacca (voluntary assistance)(helpfulness)
6. **Sharing of merit** / Pattidāna (dedicating merit)
7. **Rejoicing in others' merit** / Pattānumodanā — Rejoicing when others do good. Encouraging them in wholesome deeds; for example, saying: "Good! Well done! Excellent!" / "Sādhu!"
8. **Listening to Dharma** / Dhamma-savana — Listening attentively, at a proper time, freed from distractions.
9. **Teaching or sharing Dharma** / Dhamma-desanā — Share what you've verified for yourself. Teach the Dharma in harmony with the Dharma – not distorting it or using it for self-promotion, but keeping it true with the path to liberation. Teach only when these five qualities are established in you, and speak with the thought: "I will teach step by step, explain cause and effect, speak with compassion, not for material gain, and without disparaging myself or others."
10. **Correcting one's view** / Diṭṭhujukamma (developing right view)

5 Methods to overcome distracting (unwholesome) thoughts:
Always begin with the first before proceeding. These progress from low to high intensity.
1. **Replace it with its opposite** / Vitakka-paṭivinaya — Example: replace ill will with goodwill
2. **Contemplating the danger (drawbacks) of pursuing the thought** / Ādīnava-anupassana — Consider the stress and suffering or harm the thought could lead to
3. **Ignore and forget the thought (turn away from it)** / Asaṭṭhiya / Asammānasa — Pay no attention and give it no consideration
4. **Investigate the cause (source) of distraction** / Vitakka-samudaya-paṭipassanā — Examine what gave rise to it: craving, contact, or conditions
5. **Apply Determination and Resolve** / Abhiniggaṇhāti cetasā — This is the last resort method when all others fail. You clench your teeth, press your tongue to the roof of your mouth and rip the unwholesome thought from the mind or crush it into suppression.

5 Remembrances / Pañca Anusati
We should reflect on these facts often, regardless of our gender or status as lay or ordained:
1. **"I'm of the nature to age (grow old), I haven't gone beyond aging."** / Jarādhammomhi jaraṃ anatīto
2. **"I'm of the nature to get sick (ill), I haven't gone beyond illness."** / Vyādhidhammomhi vyādhiṃ anatīto
3. **"I'm of the nature to die, I haven't gone beyond death."** / Maraṇadhammomhi maraṇaṃ anatīto
4. **"I will grow different, separate from all that is dear and appealing to me."** / Sabbehi me piyehi manāpehi nānābhāvo vinābhāvo
5. **"I'm the owner of my actions, heir to my actions, born of my actions, related to my actions, and have my actions as my judge. I will inherit the results of my good or evil (virtuous or immoral) actions."** / Kammassakomhi kammadāyādo kammayoni kammabandhū kammapaṭisarano yaṃ kammaṃ karissāmi kalyāṇaṃ vā pāpakaṃ vā tassa dāyādo bhavissāmi.

Based on these facts, one should also reflect:
- It's because of intoxication with youth, health, and life that beings conduct themselves in a bad way (in body, speech, or mind). But when the young, healthy, or living being reflects on these facts, their intoxication is either abandoned or weakened.
- And there are beings who feel desire and passion for the things they find dear and appealing. Because of that passion, they conduct themselves in a bad way (in body, speech, or mind). But when they often reflect on that fact, that desire and passion for those things is either abandoned or weakened.

You can repeat with a new focus, contemplating the fact that these are universal for all living beings. For example: "I'm not the only one subject to aging, illness, death, separation, karma (results of one's intentional actions), etc.

Notes:
- The Remembrances are used to generate a **Spiritual Urgency** / Saṁvega, to make progress and attain full liberation now instead of later. But this is to be balanced by **Serene Confidence** / Passada, so that we can follow the path to completion and are doing so when we practice The Noble 8-Fold path.
- Remembrance #s 1, 2, 3, & 4 help us understand the first and second noble truths. And the 5th helps us understand karma. Overall, these support **dispassion** / virāga and **disenchantment** / nibbidā.

* *See The 4 Noble Truths*
* *See The 8-Fold Path, Right View: Karma & Results*
* *See Tetrad 4 – Vipassanā (Insight): #14 Contemplate dispassion, and Disenchantment*

Steps of Radiating Meditation Method / Pharitvā

Step 1 - Begin with one abode
Choose which abode
- Begin with Goodwill. Once you complete a round, repeat by choosing the next abode in order from, Compassion, Appreciative Joy, and finally Equanimity.
- Develop the heart-mind filling your attention with the selected abode.
- It may help to bring to mind a simple positive friendship or phrase. Example: "May all beings be happy / Sabbe sattā sukhī hontu"

Step 2 - Radiate it outward to each of all the directions
Radiate to all directions / Disā (pervading all directions)
- Radiate to the four directions / catud-disā
- Then above / uddhaṁ
- Below / adho
- Everywhere / sabbadhi
- Include all beings (without exception) / sabbe sattā with the same quality "as to oneself" / sabbattatāya

Step 3 - Make it boundless, impartial, and wholesome
Make It Boundless / Appamāṇa
- Cultivate the quality of the abode as limitless and immeasurable / appamāṇa
- Sending it outward, free from hostility / adosa
- Sending it outward, free from ill will / abyāpajjana

Step 4 - Repeat for each abode before going to Step 5
Repeat for the remaining abodes
After Goodwill / Mettā, repeat steps 1–3 for:
- Compassion / Karuṇā
- Sympathetic Joy / Muditā
- Equanimity / Upekkhā

Practice each separately and cultivate it equally.

Step 5 - Rest in the abode
Unification of Mind / Ceto-vimutti
- Freeing the heart-mind, you rest (relish) in the ease the abodes bring
- Last, you can enter calm, concentration / Jhāna, and eventually insight leading to liberation.

Step 6 - Enter Concentration / Jhāna
* *see Meditative Absorption (Immersion) / Jhāna*

Step 7 - Practice Insight Meditation / Vipassanā
* *see Tetrad 4 – Vipassanā (Insight) / Vipassanā-bhāvanā*

Step 8 - Liberation / Nibbāna
* *see Process of Awakening*

Tranquility meditations are used to calm (tranquilize):

The Fabrications (formations) / Saṅkhārā
These construct our experience.
- **Bodily Fabrications** / Kāya-saṅkhāra
  - **Breathing** / Assāsa-passāsa — In 4th Jhāna, breathing becomes imperceptible both subjectively to you and externally to any observer. This is referred to as "breathing ceases".
- **Verbal Fabrications** / Vacī-saṅkhāra
  - **Applied thought** / Vitakka
  - **Sustained thought** / Vicāra — Both cease in 2nd Jhāna
- **Mental Fabrications** / Citta-saṅkhāra
  - **Feeling** / Vedanā
  - **Perception** / Saññā — Both may cease during Vipassanā if one is either a Non-returner or Arahant. This is **Cessation of Perception and Feeling** / Nirodha Samāpatti. * *see The Final Stages of Fruition of the Path*

16 Steps of Ānāpāna-sati in 4 Tetrads:

Tetrad 1 – Calming
Body Contemplation / Kāya-anupassanā
1. **Understanding, this in-breath is long. Or Understanding, this out-breath is long** / dīghaṃ-assasanto/dīghaṃ-passasanto
2. **Understanding, this in-breath is short. Or Understanding, this out-breath is short** / rassaṃ-assasanto/rassaṃ-passasanto
3. **Experiencing the whole body** / sabba-kāya-paṭisaṃvedī
4. **Calming bodily formations** (breathing) / kāya-saṅkhāra-passaddhi

Function: Establishes a foundation for concentration. Tranquilizes body & breathing (physical calming)
Jhāna Factors present: 1st & 2nd

Tetrad 2 – Joyful Energy, Tranquility
Feeling Contemplation / Vedanā-anupassanā
5. **Experiencing joyful energy** / pīti-paṭisaṃvedī — Fill the body, suffuse it with joy, like how a cook mixes flower and water into dough.
6. **Experiencing pleasure** / sukha-paṭisaṃvedī
7. **Experiencing mental formations** (feeling & perception) / citta-saṅkhāra-paṭisaṃvedī
8. **Calming mental formations** (feeling & perception) / citta-saṅkhāra-passaddhi

Function: Develops (cultivates) joy & tranquility
Jhāna Factors present: 3rd & 4th

Tetrad 3 – Unification
Mind Contemplation / Citta-anupassanā
9. **Experiencing the mind** / citta-paṭisaṃvedī
10. **Gladdening the mind** / abhippamodayaṃ cittaṃ (citta-abhippamodana)
11. **Concentrating (steadying) the mind** / Samādahaṃ cittaṃ (citta-samādhi)
12. **Liberating (letting go of) the mind** / vimocayaṃ cittaṃ (vossajjayaṃ cittaṃ)

Jhāna development is most present here, especially in steps 10–12.
Function: Unifies attention, deepens stillness and unification (culminates in Jhāna), and helps to enter The 4 Immaterial States
Jhāna factors present: 3rd & 4th

Tetrad 4 – Vipassanā (Insight) / Vipassanā-bhāvanā
Dharma Contemplation / Dhamma-anupassanā
13. **Contemplate impermanence** / anicca-anupassanā — Provides insight into the fabrications / saṅkhārā
14. **Contemplate dispassion** / virāga-anupassanā — Cultivating disinterest for fabrications, they fade away
15. **Contemplate cessation** / nirodha-anupassanā — Experiencing cessation of the fading of craving / taṇhā and clinging / upādāna for the fabrications / saṅkhārā
16. **Contemplate relinquishment** / paṭinissagga-anupassanā — Letting go of the experience of cessation, there is only Nirvana

Function: Observe impermanence, cessation, letting go (relinquishment) to experience insight / Vipassanā.
This deepens Right View (the first step of the 8-fold path) and Right Mindfulness. Brings about the insight knowledge of Nirvana.

Disenchantment / Nibbidā weakens craving and clinging toward all conditioned formations, including bodily, verbal, and mental fabrications.

Disenchantment / Nibbidā
(weariness)(distaste)(exasperation)
From observing how the Fabrications arise and pass away, you get insight that they're: inconstant (unstable)(unreliable), unsatisfactory (disappointing) (stressful), and impersonal (occurring without our will).
* *See The 3 Characteristics of Conditioned Existence*

This insight leads to **disenchantment** with fabricating our experiences. You realize that constantly fabricating (manufacturing) experiences that won't last is exhausting and unsatisfactory. Realizing these drawbacks, you loosen the attachment to, interest in, fascination with, and appetite (hunger or thirst) for feeding off those fabrications. The result, you get a distaste for conditioned existence. Disenchanting, you naturally lose your passion for and fascination with the fabrications. At this point, you contemplate **dispassion** / virāga, and it's especially important to abandon the craving to fabricate (as is noted in the 2nd Noble Truth).

So, instead of relying on what's fleeting for one's liberation, you open to what lasts and isn't fabricated, the unconditioned. By letting go of the conditioned realm, you experience cessation, and if you let go of that, you access Nirvana.

Insight develops Right View into Right Knowledge which leads to Right Liberation (Release)

Mundane Path / Lokiya Magga
Object meditation leads to access concentration. Intention to decrease greed, ill will, and delusion

Supramundane Path / Lokuttara Magga
Objectless meditation leads to cessation. Fully absorbed and with the intention to increase compassion, goodwill, and insight, one lets go of all other objects of meditation and instead turns to the Nirvana Element for meditation.

Process of Awakening:
The letting go of clinging / Paṭinissagga
- **Nirvana Element** / Nibbāna dhātu — To get to the point of experiencing Nirvana, you first form a perception of what it is like and treat it as an element.
- **Awakening** / Bodhi (enlightenment) This is the direct experience of cessation (Nirvana) / Nibbāna.
- **Path Moment** / Magga — The exact and irreversible moment of awakening (Bodhi) insight that cuts some of the 10 Fetters and marks the entry into one of the stages of awakening. Many things seem like this, so verify carefully.
- **Fruit Moment** / Phala — Immediate effect of encountering Nirvana directly (brief and utterly peaceful). This is the result (fruition) of the Noble 8-fold path.

The Path Moment cuts (destroys) some of the fetters, depending on the stage of awakening

The Noble 8-fold Path results in: **9th and 10th path elements:**
- **Right Knowledge** (gnosis) / Sammā-ñāṇa
- **Right Liberation** / Sammā-vimutti

Both elements develop incrementally, and combined, they lead one through the four final stages of awakening, until full liberation, the path and fruit of an Arahant.
* *See Supramundane Right View*

10 Fetters / Dasa saṁyojanā
Bind us to the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth / Samsāra, so they keep us recreating Dukkha. These prevent us from realizing liberation (Nirvana).
* *see 12 Links of Dependent Origination*
* *see 4 Noble Truths*

1. **Identity view** / Sakkāya-diṭṭhi — Belief in a permanent self in relation to the five aggregates
2. **Skeptical doubt of Dharma** / Vicikicchā — Doubt about the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, any core truths, the path or its efficacy, or one's ability to follow it.
3. **Attachment to rites & rituals** / Sīlabbata-parāmāsa — Believing ritual alone leads to enlightenment
4. **Sensual desire** / Kāma-rāga (sensual lust) The habitual desire for sensual pleasures
5. **Anger or ill will** / Vyāpāda (Byāpāda) — Hatred, anger, aversion
6. **Attachment to material existence** / Rūpa-rāga — Lust for material rebirth in fine-material (form) jhānic realms
7. **Attachment to immaterial existence** / Arūpa-rāga — Lust for formless realm rebirth in formless jhānic realms
8. **Conceit** (pride) / Māna — Making comparisons of: "I am better, equal, or worse than others"
9. **Restlessness** / Uddhacca — Agitation, mental excitement, subtle instability
10. **Ignorance of the 4 noble truths** / Avijjā — Misunderstandings about the Noble Truths

The 4 paths (stages) of awakening (enlightenment):
- **Stream-enterer** / Sotāpanna — Removal of the first 3 fetters.
  By letting go of the fabrications / saṅkhārā, the heart-mind opens into un-fabricated stillness — Nirvana directly realized.
  Having experienced Nirvana firsthand, they know liberation as a reality. Confidence shifts from a hopeful trust in the promise of awakening to an unshakable (avecca-pasāda) faith (saddhā) in the Dharma that led them there.
- **Once-returner** / Sakadāgāmī — Significant weakening of 4th & 5th fetters.
- **Non-returner** / Anāgāmī — Removal of the remaining 4th & 5th fetters.
- **Arahant** / Arahant — Removal of the remaining 6th-10th fetters. Notion of "self" dissolves (drops away) completely. Full liberation from all rebirth and Dukkha. Full Awakening (full enlightenment) / Sambodhi.
  The bodily functions continue until the breakup of the body at death.

Nirvana (with & without remainder)

The goal is to experience:

Nirvana

Nirvana / Nibbāna
(the unconditioned)(the deathless)(cessation of Dukkha)
The reality that's unconditioned, existing outside of time and space, and not subject to arising and passing away. While Nirvana has many names, it's actually ineffable.

While pleasure is preferred to pain, unending (unyielding) pleasure is eventually unbearable (painful). Both lead to dissatisfaction and even neutral feelings can't be maintained because all conditioned phenomena (all conditioned experiences) are unstable and continually change, providing no rest. So rebirth is tiresome, wearisome, and ultimately unbearable. Instead, the relief of liberation (cessation) from all fabrications is preferred. Instead of feeding the heart-mind on Dukkha, one feeds on The Noble 8-fold Path until they're able to stop feeding altogether, a fully liberated one / Arahant. An Arahant is said to abide in Nirvana but with the **remainder** of this mortal life.

Qualities of Nirvana:
- **Unconditioned** / Asaṅkhata-dhātu — (not subject to change, decay, or conditions) Not produced by causes and conditions. It's beyond all compounded phenomena.
- **Deathless** / Amata-dhātu — Free from birth, aging, and death.
- **Unborn** / Ajāta-dhātu — It was never born or brought into existence. It exists timelessly.
- **Unoriginated** / Abhūta-dhātu — Not arisen from anything. Beyond all phenomena that comes into being.
- **Unmade** / Akata-dhātu — Not a created thing. Not fabricated by volitional action.
- **Beyond time** / Atīta-kāla-dhātu — It's not in the domain of past, present, or future. It transcends time.
- **Perfect Peace** / Santo-dhātu — It's absolute peace and calm (santi), free from the agitation of saṃsāra.
- **Supreme Bliss** / Parama-sukha-dhātu — It's the highest happiness—not sensual pleasure, but the bliss of freedom from stress and suffering (Dukkha).
- **Complete Safety** / Khema-dhātu — (completely secure) It's complete safety, beyond the reach of suffering and defilements.
- **Ultimate Refuge** / Tṭṭhāna-dhātu — Nirvana is the final refuge for beings seeking liberation.

Parinirvana

Parinirvana / Parinibbāna
This is the state of an Arahant after mortal death. So it is Nirvana **without remainder** of this mortal life.