

## Seven Factors of Awakening –A Year Living These Treasures- Home practices #4

**(Next class 5/10/24 at 6:00-8:30pm). HAVE FUN with these practices!**

- 1) **Sit every day.** Try sitting for a minimum of 15-30 minutes per day. (More if you are able)  
Practice your meditation in silence.  
**Start your sitting practice remembering** your intention to be Mindful, the first factor of awakening. **Asking:** “What is being know right now? Is Mindfulness present right now or not? (laugh if not) Is it possible to connect with any quality of Mindfulness? Or to notice how the mind feels, when mindfulness is present. Get to know a sense of awareness, alertness, presence, or even a subtly pleasant quality of mindfulness.  
**This month, open to Investigation, the second factor of Awakening.**  
Investigation allows us to look at our experience in a very fresh, inquiring way-it’s being with our experience with openness. Investigation has to do with a silent inquiry of our experience- We are not analyzing or trying to fix anything, or trying to figure it out- **Instead we are learning what’s wholesome, skillful, beneficial (kusala-)& what is not (Akusala) \*\*More info on investigation at the end of home practices**  
**Asking:** Is there interest and curiosity about your experience? Asking the question itself is a form of investigation. Helps us not to assume that things are a certain way-not to draw conclusions without inquiring if they are true.  
**Technically** this factor is known as investigation of Dharma’s - the 3 characteristics of all experiences- **Knowing Impermanence-** that everything **changes-**  
**Knowing Imperfect-** experience is **unsatisfactory**, often we are discontented –we want more, or afraid of losing it, or don’t like it so we push away, or neutral- space out- just not satisfied  
**Knowing impersonal—not self** -it doesn’t belong to me, I am not in control of it. These 3 help us to release whatever the clinging is. **Investigation discerns & illuminates the truth through discriminating wisdom**-Knowing what’s what. Is there interest & curiosity, about your experience, right now or not? Begin to understand what are wholesome/skillful states of mind & what are not. It’s like we are turning on a light in a dark room & seeing clearly. Investigation can be understood as turning on the question, “What is this?” or “What is happening? & letting the light of that question reveal the particulars of the present moment experience. (also see how we react to what is happening)
- 2) **Continue this month of practice-** (*Investigation can counter the hindrance of doubt*)  
*When the awakening factors are present there is no room for the hindrances. The hindrances are absent. One simple way of understanding our practice is to nurture or let go-to release or let go, of the hindrances and to strengthen or cultivate the awakening factors. It is possible to be mindful of the hindrances as an object of meditation* **Both in formal practice & daily life practice! Recollect** that the awakening factors point to freedom-free from greed, hatred, delusion- We can experience that in clear moments when the hindrances are absent. Might be nano-seconds and those moments can begin to grow **Ahh..Awakening is a verb, a process!**  
**Hindrance Hint:** If a hindrance arises- get to know it And If what is arising is too difficult in this moment-open to your anchor or the 3 E’s- eyebrows, earlobe, elbow. Sometimes it is skillful when something is very strong to put it aside, especially if you’re willing to open to it when there is more steadiness of heart & mind. Requires patience.
- 3) **Walking Meditation:** Be Mindful when you are walking. Gently aware of the feet making contact with the ground.
- 4) **Gratitude Practices:** 3 things you are grateful for daily. Email or Text your buddies.

- 5) **Pause Meditation: (Several times in your day)**
- 6) **Thanissaro Bhikkhu's book, Factors For Awakening,**  
<https://www.dhammatalks.org/books/#FactorsforAwakening> Please read pages 13-17
- 7) **Please read daily, The Seven Factors of Awakening:** Notice in sitting practice & daily life when any of the above states of heart or mind are present in your body, heart, and mind.
1. **Mindfulness (sati)**  
Being aware of what is happening in the present moment
  2. **Investigation (dhamma-vicaya)**  
Investigation supported by wisdom.  
Understands what are skillful/healthy/beneficial states of mind and what are not.
  3. **Energy (viriyā)-Diligence, effort.**  
Increased engagement with practice, especially freeing oneself from unskillful states.
  4. **Joy (pīti)**  
Feeling of delight, rapture.  
Touching that which is refreshing and beautiful, both within and without.  
Arises when attention is absorbed
  5. **Tranquility (passaddhi)**  
Calming and stilling of body/ mind,  
Ease, quietness of mind, relaxation
  6. **Concentration (samādhi)**  
The mind is focused, settled, steady and composed  
The mind becomes unified around what we're concentrating on,  
one-pointedness of mind.
  7. **Equanimity (upekkhā)**  
Balance, spaciousness, and non-reactivity of mind,  
balance in the face of change, being aware of all phenomena w/o grasping or aversion  
Sublime and extremely satisfying state of heart/mind
- 8) **Please get to know, The Five Hindrances:** Can you surround each with acceptance?
- **Sense-desire:** wanting, lust or greed, craving-fantasy.
  - **Aversion:** ill will, hatred, anger, fear, boredom, annoyance, irritation, impatience, judging- guilt.
  - **Sloth & torpor:** sleepiness, sluggishness, dullness, fogginess, lack of vitality.
  - **Restlessness and worry:** anxiousness, agitation, nervousness, jumpiness.
  - **Doubt:** Uncertainty, self doubt, skeptical doubt, uncertainty/indecision
- A Gentle Hindrance Hint: How did-do we relate when these Hindrances arise in meditation & in our daily life?** The best way is to relate with skillfulness is to recognize, know what is happening in the present, to be mindful. Simply acknowledge the hindrance is that has arisen in this moment in your life, in your practice. If possible, touch them with your heart. To connect with tenderness or caring, to befriend the hindrance, do your best not to judge them.
- 9) **\*\*More on Investigation:** Investigation is awakening from ignorance. It is the wisdom factor of the mind, the investigation of truth. This factor discerns & illuminates the truth by discriminating wisdom. It distinguishing between what is skillful to the development of our practice & what is not. We discern to abandon the unwholesome & to cultivate the wholesome. We can choose to cultivate the wholesome & let go of the unwholesome. Example: If you feel an inclination to be generous, you can choose to water the seeds of generosity by following through on that

inclination. Or you may be able to distinguish mean-spirited feelings & choose to let them go.

**Questions to explore:**

- a) Is this experience/action skillful or unskillful? Unskillful actions stem from desire, aversion, delusion. Skillful actions are rooted in generosity, compassion, loving-kindness. This can be our moral compass.
- b) Is this a habit pattern, a tendency?
- c) Are you taking this personally?
- d) Do you understand the nature of thought?