

Uddhacca,kukkucca

Restlessness and remorse

Theme: The fourth of the five mental hindrances

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1. *Uddhacca,kukkucca* as a hindrance

1.1 DEFINITIONS OF UDDHACCA,KUKKUCCA. *Uddhacca,kukkucca* (BHS *auddhaty,kaukr̥tya*), translated as restlessness and remorse, or flurry and worry, is the fourth of the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*)¹ and the ninth of the ten fetters (*samyojana*) [2.1.3]. The Commentaries define the term *udhacca,kukkucca* as a dvandva, saying that *udhacca* is a state of mental agitation,² *kukkucca* is a sense of regret on account of good undone and evil done so that there is a lack of mental stillness.³ Or, *uddhacca* is a state of agitation, while *kukkucca* is the taking up as mental objects a matter of transgressions out of uncertainty.⁴

While *uddhacca* is mental restlessness (arising, for example, from thinking about the future) inducing bodily restlessness, *kukkucca* arises from harping on the past, on memories or imaginations of unwholesome deeds of omissions and commissions, that is, guilt and remorse. **L S Cousins** thinks that the fourth hindrance, that of *uddhacca,kukkucca* seems to refer to “states of mildly manic-depressive nature.” (1973: 188).

A *nīvaraṇa* is a mental hindrance, that is, a mental state or bodily conduct that hinder the meditation or development of the mind. As in the case of sloth and torpor (*thīna,middha*), the expression *uddhacca-kukkucca* actually comprises two hindrances, that is, restlessness *and* remorse (S 5:110). They are treated as a single hindrance (*uddhacca,kukkucca*, “the restlessness of remorse”), that is, as a tatpurusha, probably because the former is more mental while the latter more bodily, or that *kukkucca* is outwardly expressed as *uddhacca*.

1.2 IMAGERIES OF UDDHACCA,KUKKUCCA. A vivid illustration of the agitating effect of restlessness and remorse on the mind is that of a bowl of water that is whipped up by strong winds, so that it is impossible to see a reflection of our face in it. Similarly, the hindrance of restlessness and remorse agitates the mind and causes so that it is impossible to see and know according to reality. Moreover, just as water stirred in this way by the wind may easily spill, similarly restlessness and remorse can easily spill over, as it were, affecting those nearby with its agitated and unsettled ambience.⁵

The Sāmañña-phala Sutta (D 2), on the other hand, uses a human imagery to demonstrate the effect that restlessness and remorse can have on our mental freedom: one under the sway of restless and remorse is like a *slave*, one is utterly dependent on others and unable to go where one wishes.⁶ This imagery reflects the degree to which hindrance of restlessness and remorse can grip the mind, agitating it with endless activity so that, we lose any sense of inner stillness, we desperately seek and depend on external support (such as the attention, approval or authority of a father-figure, guru or God). In short, this is mental slavery.⁷

¹ D 2.68/1:71, D 22.13/2:300 f = A 3.119.7/1:272 f = Vbh 199 (D 2:300), D 13.30/1:246 = M 99.15/2:203 = S 45.177/5:60 = Vbh 378 = Nc 13 = PmA 117 ≠ Dhs 204 = Mohv 101, D 25.16/3:49, 33.2.1(6)/3:234, 33.3.3(4)/3:-269 = M 43.19/1:294 = A 3.57.1/1:161 f, D 34.1.6(4)/3:278; M 68.6/1:463; S 3.24.14/1:99, 46.2/5:64 qu VbhA 270-274 (S 5:65,3 ≠ A 1:3,24-31); A 1.2/1:3, 5.23.4/3:16, 5.51.3/3:63, 10.20.4/5:30, Nc 379; Vbh 256; Dhs 205, 1486; Peṭk 138,26; Vism 4.104/146; DA 781. See *Nīvaraṇa* = SD 32.1.

² *Uddhaccam nāma cittassa ~o* (ItA 2:177,18); *uddhaccan ti ~e na vūpasamo ti avūpasamo* (DhsA 260,22).

³ *Uddhacca,kukkucan ti uddhaccañ c'eva kukkucan ca; tattha uddhaccam nāma cittassa uddhatākāro, kukkucam nāma akata,kalyāṇassa kata,pāpassa tap,paccayā vippaṭṭisāro, cetaso avūpa,samo ti ~ass'ev'etaṃ nāmaṃ* (AA 1:34,21; cf NmA 1:62,25-63,2).

⁴ *~an ti ettha uddhatākāro uddhaccam, ārammaṇe anicchayatāya vatthu'jjhacaro kukkucam* (VbhA 370,17).

⁵ (*Nīvaraṇa*) **Saṅgārava S** (S 46.55.7/5:123) = SD 3.12; (**Manta**) **Saṅgārava S** (A 5.193.6/3:232 f) = SD 73.3. For *comy* on the similes of the 5 hindrances (MA 2:318-321), see SD 10.13 Appendix. See also Nyanaponika, *The Five Mental Hindrances*, BPS Wheel no 26, 1961:27-34.

⁶ D 2.68.72/1:72 = SD 8.10.

⁷ On *mental slavery*, see **The Person in Buddhism** = SD 29.6b (7.4).

Another well known simile, found in the suttas, compares the presence of the five hindrances to various metals that corrupt the purity of gold. Here *restlessness and remorse* correspond to lead, whose presence will cause the gold to become corrupted, rendering it brittle and unfit for being used by a goldsmith, as it has lost its malleability and radiance.⁸ In a similar way, says **the (Nīvaraṇa) Saṅgārava Sutta** (S 46.55), due to the influence of restlessness and remorse, the mind becomes unready and disinclined to effort and energy. When restlessness and remorse are present in the mind, we are unable to recognize what is good for us or what is good for others, nor are we able remember even what has been memorized for a long time.⁹

Lust takes over our minds so completely that we become restless when we are unable to get what we desire, and to feel remorseful after we have tasted the desirable fruit. But the remorse is soon forgotten because the desire is very strong, and the whole cycle repeats itself. The snake of lust bites its own tail of restlessness and remorse.

2 Nature of *uddhacca.kukkucca*

2.1 UDDHACCA AS A MENTAL FACTOR.

2.1.1 What is *uddhacca*? *Uddhacca* (Skt *audhatya*)¹⁰ means restlessness, agitation, flurry, excitement, distraction.¹¹ Buddhaghosa defines it as follows:

Uddhacca is a state of agitation. It has the characteristics of unstillness, like water whipped up by the wind. Its function is unsteadiness, like a flag or banner whipped up by the wind. It is manifested as turbulence, like ashes flying up, after being pelted with stones. It should be regarded as a mental disturbance. (Vism 14.165/469,5 = Abhdhv 23,32 = NmA 62,25 ≠ Mohv 40,33)¹²

Since *uddhacca* is restlessness in the sense of mental agitation, distraction and excitement, it is as such, the opposite of mental stillness. Such restlessness can arise through excessive striving, which the discourses, such as **the Paṇḍu, dhovaka Sutta** (A 3.100a), compare to a goldsmith who keeps blowing on gold in the fire, as a result of which the gold will be burnt.¹³ We need to be less extreme in our spiritual quest and daily life, and it helps to be less goal-driven.

In fact, **the Iddhi, pāda Vibhaṅga Sutta** (S 51.20) clearly indicates that any desire for progress on the path can be excessive (*atipaggahīta chanda*), and as such will cause restlessness.¹⁴ The same is true of excessive energy. Hence, even though desire for progress or energy must be exerted for cultivating the path, if there is too much of it, then the hindrance of restlessness will arise and obstruct progress. As long

⁸ (Saṅkhitta) Kilesa S (S 46.33/5:92) = SD 74.6; (Nīvaraṇa) Upakkilesa S (A 5.23.1-4/3:16) = SD 74.3.

⁹ S 46.55.7/5:123 = SD 3.12.

¹⁰ Abstr fr *udhata* (ts), pp *ud* (up, upwards, expressing intensity) + √HAN (to smite): see CPD sv; DPL sv *udhata*¹. Kaccv 640, Sadd 863,29 wrong deriv fr *ud-dhū*, Sadd 864,1 correct: *uddhatassa bhāvo ~am*.

¹¹ A 1:256, 282; 3:375, 421 449; 4:87; 5:142, 145, 148; D 3:234; S 5:277 f; DhsA 260; SnA 492 (in sense of “haughtiness”?) for Sn 702 *unṇata*); Nm 220, 501; MA 1:81, 83; 2:9, 97 f, 119, 142, 145, 169, 176; Pug 18, 59; Dhs 427, 429 (*cittassa*), 1159, 1229, 1426, 1482; Vbh 168, 369, 372 377; Vism 137, 469 (= *udhata, bhāva*); Sdhp 459. CPD sv *uddhacca* says that “self-righteousness, haughtiness, conceit” not justified by context or epexegetis. For Abhidhamma and late explanations of *uddhacca*, see Dhs §429 f/86 f; Vbh §552/255 and Vism 14.165/469; see also John Brough, Dh:G p280. See also: D:RD 1:82; Dhs:R 110-112n; Abhs:BRS 1.6, 2.4(4); Abhs:SR 18, 45, 83 n5.

¹² *Uddhata-bhāvo ~am. Tam avūpasama, lakkhaṇam, vātābhīghāta, cala, jalam viya; anavatthāna-rasam, vātābhīghāta, cala, dhaja, paṭākā viya; bhantatta, paccupaṭṭhānam, pāsāṇābhīghāta, samuddhata, bhasmam viya; cetaso avūpasame ayoniso, manasikāra, padaṭṭhānam, citta, vikkhepo ti daṭṭhabbam* (Vism 14.165/469,5 = Abhāv 23,32 = NmA 62,25 ≠ Mohv 40,33).

¹³ A 3.100.13/1:257 = SD 1911.

¹⁴ S 51.20.5/5:277 = SD 28.14.

as there is restlessness, notes **the (Cha Dhamma) Arahatta Sutta** (A 6.66), it will be impossible to reach the final goal.¹⁵

2.1.2 A balanced practice. The need for balance in meditation can be seen from the case of the monk **Soṇa Kolivisa**, as related in **the Soṇa (Kolivisa) Sutta** (A 6.55). After putting forth excessive effort, Soṇa is depressed because he has not progressed. The Buddha, to help him realize that he has to keep to the middle path, uses the imagery of a lute (*viṇā*), an instrument with which Soṇa is familiar from his erstwhile lay life as a musician (A 3:375).

If the strings of a lute are too taut, the sound will become shrill, but if it is too loose, it would make a poor sound. Just as the lute's strings need to be properly adjusted, representing a middle position between laxity and tenseness, similarly Soṇa has to walk the middle way in order to progress. In his case, this requires giving up excessive striving and its resultant restlessness. Keeping to the Buddha's advice, Soṇa soon enough attains the final goal which earlier has eluded him due to his excessive striving.¹⁶

2.1.3 Causes of uddhacca. According to **the Pacalā Sutta** (A 7.58), speaking harsh and provocative words, too, can bring about restlessness, as they may lead to argumentation, as a result of which restlessness arises in the mind, preventing mental concentration.¹⁷ Restlessness can also arise in connection with alms-collecting, adds the Sutta, as when a monastic receives nothing because people are too busy to notice that someone has come, an unmindful monastic might become restless and wonder who has caused a rift between them and their supporters.¹⁸

The presence of restlessness, warns **the Abhabba Sutta** (A 10.76), makes it difficult for us to be inspired or motivated to visit the noble ones (the saints or spiritual teachers) and hear their teachings, or to overcome a fault-finding disposition.¹⁹ **The Aññādhikaraṇa Sutta** (A 10.86) says that restlessness is a mental blemish to be avoided by those who live solitary forest lives, and to be obsessed by restlessness will lead to decline in the Teaching and Discipline of the Buddha.²⁰ Hence, **the (Sattā) Sacitta Sutta** (A 10.51) advises a monastic to regularly reflect or examine to ensure that no restlessness is present in his mind.²¹ A key means for overcoming restlessness is the practice of mental calm (*samatha*).²²

2.1.4 Uddhacca as an imperfection. *Uddhacca* is not only one of the five hindrances, but also the fourth of the five higher fetters (D 3:234).²³ Since the five higher fetters are overcome during progress from non-return to arhathood, the total removal of the last and subtlest trace of restlessness occurs only with final liberation.

A noteworthy usage of *uddhacca* occurs in **the (Yuganaddha) Paṭipadā Sutta** (A 4.170), which refers to restlessness in its description of one of the ways to attain final liberation.²⁴ According to this discourse, we can reach the path to final liberation when the mind is under the influence of *dhamm'uddhacca*, that is, restlessness related to the Dharma. Once the mind settles down and becomes focussed, the path is attained.

¹⁵ A 6.66/3:421.

¹⁶ A 6.55/3:375 = SD 20.12.

¹⁷ A 7.58.10/4:87.

¹⁸ A 7.58.10/4:87 f.

¹⁹ A 10.76.32/5:148 = SD 2.4.

²⁰ A 10.86.2/5:163 = SD 12.15.

²¹ A 10.51/5:93 = SD 5.13.

²² A 6.116/3:449. On *samatha*, see **Samatha and Vipassanā** = SD 41.1.

²³ That is, the 9th of **the 10 fetters** (*dasa samyojana*), viz: (1) self-identity view (*sakkāya, diṭṭhi*), (2) spiritual doubt (*vicikicchā*), (3) attachment to rituals and vows (*sīla-b, bata, parāmāsa*), (4) sensual lust (*kāma, rāga*), (5) aversion (*paṭigha*), (6) greed for form existence (*rūpa, rāga*), (7) greed for formless existence (*arūpa, rāga*), (8) conceit (*māna*), (9) restlessness (or remorse) (*uddhacca*), (10) ignorance (*avijjā*) (S 5:61; A 5:13; Vbh 377). In some places, no 5 (*kāma, rāga*) is replaced by ill will (*vyāpāda*). The first 5 are **the lower fetters** (*orambhāgiya*), and the rest, **the higher fetters** (*uddhambhāgiya*). The abandonment of the lower 5 fetters makes one a **non-returner** (*opapātika* or *anāgāmi*): see **Ānāpānasati S** (M 118.10 = 7.13). On **the streamwinner**, see **Entering the Stream** = SD 3.3. See also **Kiṭāgiri S** (M 70) = SD 11.1 (5.1).

²⁴ A 4.170.5/2:157 = SD 41.5.

The commentary on this passage and the Paṭisambhidhā, magga explains that this description refers to the arising of radiance (*obhāsa*), one of the ten imperfections of insight.²⁵ Not understanding this to be an imperfection and failing to notice its impermanent nature then leads to the arising of restlessness. An alternative interpretation is to take *dhamm'uddhacca* as referring to “mental distress brought on by eagerness to realize the Dhamma, a state of spiritual anxiety that sometimes can precipitate an instantaneous enlightenment experience” (Nyanaponika & Bodhi 1999: 294 n69). An example of this is Bāhiya Dāru, -cīriya’s awakening (U 1.0).²⁶ [2.2.2]

2.2 KUKKUCCA AS A MENTAL FACTOR.

2.2.1 Meaning of kukkucca? The word *kukkucca* (BHS *kaukrtya*) comes from *ku-* (*kud-* or *kum-*, bad, defective) + *kicca* (that which is to be done). We find two main meanings of *kukkucca* in the Buddhist texts, that is, the physical and the psychological.²⁷

(1) The physical meaning of *kukkucca* is defective action, misconduct, bad character. Buddhaghosa defines it as “*kukkucca* is the state of what is improperly done, a misdeed.”²⁸ The Commentaries generally explain this sense as literally as bad behaviour or improper conduct, such as, with one’s hands and feet.²⁹

(2) Psychological meaning: remorse, scruple, worry.³⁰ In this sense, *kukkucca* often with appears *vip-ṭissāra* (regret); and with *uddhacca*, it is the fourth of the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*).³¹ The dispelling of remorse is one of the duties and virtues of a wise sage (*muni*).³² The opposite of *kukkucca* is *akukkucca* (adj), “free from worry, having no remorse” (Sn 850).

2.2.2 Why worry? *Kukkucca* is so closely related to thinking or worrying what is done (commission) and what is not done (omission) that the theme of remorse is very common in the *Vinaya*. The background stories to numerous *Vinaya* rules report that monks feel remorse regarding certain actions and would only undertake them after explicit permission by the Buddha is given. Here, remorse is apparently such a common occurrence that some monks would purposely try to arouse remorse in others, so that a regulation has to be introduced to stop such a mischief.³³

The relatively frequent arising of remorse among monastics is also reflected in the ruling that one of the qualifications of a preceptor (ie, one who ordains a monk, A 10.33), or for the giver of tutelage (*nissaya*) to junior monks (A 10.34), is an elder monk’s ability to dispel remorse in a proper way. At least two discourses in the Upāli Vagga of the Aṅguttara record this special qualification.³⁴

Not all remorse, however, is something that is negative, to be dispelled, because at times remorse may be quite appropriate. Just as the influxes grow in those who worry about unnecessary things, so too the

²⁵ *Vipassanūpakkilesa*, viz (1) (radiance *obhāsa*), knowledge (*ñāṇa*), zest (*pīti*), tranquility (*passaddhi*), joy (*sukha*), resolution (*adhimokkha*), exertion (*paggaha*), assurance (*upaṭṭhāna*), equanimity (*upekkhā*), and attachment (*nīkānti*). These imperfections arise only in a beginner to meditation, not a saint who has attained the truth. For explanations, see Vism 20.105-130/633-638; also AA 3:143; Pm 2:100.

²⁶ U 1.10/8 = 33.7.

²⁷ See DPL sv *kukkucca*, BHSD sv *kaukrtya*.

²⁸ *Kucchitam kataṃ kukatam tassa bhāvo kukkuccam* (Vism 14.174/470; Bdhd = *Buddhadatta’s Manuals*, 24). Nāṇamoli: “It is impossible to render into English this ‘portmanteau’ etymology, eg *kucchita-kata—kukata, kukutatā ...kukkucca*, which depends mostly on a fortuitous parallelism of meaning and verbal forms in the Palu. While useless to strict modern etymologists, it has a definite semantic and mnemonic use.” (Vism:Ñ 532 n69)

²⁹ Various explanations in Nc on Sn 1106 = Dhs 1160; (*hattha,pada*~ J 1:119 = DA 1:42 (in combination with *ukkāsita & khipita,sadda*); *hattha*~ J 2:1420).

³⁰ *Kukkuccam kurute*, “to be remorseful about” (J 1:377); *kukkuccam karimsu*, “felt remorse” (DhA 4:88; J 2:366); cf *kukkuccam āpajjati*, “fall into remorse” (explained by *sankati*, “to doubt, hesitate,” J 3:66).

³¹ V 1:49, 4:70; D 1:246; S 11:9; M 1:437; A 1:134 = Sn 1106; A 1:282; Sn 925; Nc 379; DhA 3:83, 4:88; Sdhp 459; Bdhd 96. Cf *na kiñci k~m na koci vipṭissāreti*, “has nobody any remorse?” (S 3:120 = 4:46).

³² *Kukkuccam vinodetum*, “for the sake of removing remorse” (A 5:72). Cf *kukkucca pahāya*, “with remorse abandoned” (D 1:71 = A 2:210 = Pug 59); *chinna,kukkucca* (adj), “with remorse cut off” (M 1:108); *khīṇ’āsava kukkucca,vūpasanta*, “one whose influxes are destroyed, whose remorse is stilled” (S 1:167 = Sn 82).

³³ Pāc 77 = V 4:148 f.

³⁴ *Upasampadā S* (A 10.33/5:72), *Nissaya S* (A 10.34/5:73).

influxes grow in the case of those who do not remorseful over what is worthy of remorse.³⁵ For example, remorse arises in the monk Sudinna after he has had sex with his former wife. As such, his remorse is quite appropriate.³⁶ Indeed, it would have been better if remorse or worry were to have arisen earlier and prevent him from committing the misdeed.

From **the Saṅkavā Sutta** (A 3.90), we learn that remorse may be appropriate in regard to even minor matters, such as when a monk is aroused by remorse to approach the Buddha and make a formal confession that on an earlier occasion, when the Buddha was giving a talk on the importance of observing the precepts, this monk has disapproved of the Buddha's act, thinking that it was too exacting.³⁷

2.2.3 Worrying about the Dharma. At times, remorse can also stand for uncertainty in regards to the Dharma. **The Gilāna Sutta 1** (S 35.74), for example, reports how the Buddha visits a monk and inquires whether that monk has any remorse. The monk replies that he indeed has much remorse, but clarifies that he has done nothing blameworthy regarding which he would feel remorse. When asked about the source of his remorse, the monk asks for clarification on some subtler aspects of the teaching.³⁸ In such instances, the remorse is unrelated to unwholesome regret but refers to a type of remorse that is concerned with the wish to properly understand the teachings, perhaps similar to *dhamm'uddhacca*. [2.1.4]

The most famous example of *uddhacca* as a spiritual experience is arguably that of **Bāhiya Dāru-cīriya**. Bāhiya, the bark-clothed ascetic, is very excited on meeting the Buddha, and urgently requests the Buddha to teach him, fearing that he might die without hearing the Dharma, or that the Buddha might die and not teach him.³⁹ Although not specifically mentioned, we can take this as a sense of unease or restlessness towards the Dharma (*dhamm'uddhacca*) [2.1.4]. This is actually a form of samvega or sense of religious urgency.⁴⁰

Whether the mind is filled with *kukkucca* that is negative [2.2.2] or positive, the mind is diffuse or weakened. The mind is unfocussed; it is scattered. The best antidote for a scattered mind (*cetasi vikkhepa*) is breath meditation.⁴¹

2.2.4 Mood swings in meditation. It has already been noted that sensual lust (*kāma-c, chanda*) is the mother of hindrances.⁴² Sensual lust is immanent (ever-present) in the unawakened mind, and it can assume various subtle forms, that is,

- as ill will (towards what we dislike),
- as sloth and torpor (towards what does not delight us),
- restlessness and remorse (for fear of losing what we cling to, or regretting the loss of something we have been clinging to), or
- doubt (sensual desire and its various forms prevents the mind from investigating beyond itself).

On an *unconscious* level, our unawakened minds are caught in the duality of sensual lust and ill will, swinging back and forth between like and dislike. We are drawn to what we see as pleasurable, and swing away from what we see as unpleasurable or unfamiliar. On a *preconscious* level,⁴³ another duality rules the unawakened mind: when we are caught up with something that does not delight us, we fall under the weight of sloth and torpor, and when we perceive a possible or actual loss of something pleasurable, we are flurried by restlessness and remorse. All this keep us in the rut of doubt, of not knowing what to do next, except to move on instinctually, nose-led by the dominating hindrance.

Restless-and-remorse (*uddhacca, kukkucca*) are like turbulent winds that lash and stir up the mind into ripples and waves. Restlessness (*uddhacca*) manifests itself as the inability to stay with one mental object for a long time. For meditators, remorse (*kukkucca*, literally “bad-done-ness”) is often a feeling of

³⁵ A 2.10.11/1:85.

³⁶ Pār 1.5.10 = V 3:19.

³⁷ A 3.90/1:237.

³⁸ S 35.74.8-11/4:46 f = SD 70.8; cf S 3: 120, 3:125, 4:48.

³⁹ See **(Jhāna) Bāhiya S** (U 1.10/6-9) & SD 33.7 Intro (2).

⁴⁰ See **Mahā, parinibbāna S** (D 16) = SD 9 Intro (7f).

⁴¹ A 6.115/3:448 f.

⁴² See **Nīvaraṇa** = SD 32.1 (1.1.1).

⁴³ On unconscious and preconscious, see **Nīvaraṇa** = SD 32.1 (3.8).

regret, even guilt, over breaches of moral virtue. Restlessness dredges up the past, and runs into the future with a fear of negative karmic fruits.

These two pairs of hindrances—sloth-and-torpor and restlessness-and-remorse—have two general negative effects on the meditator. On account of sloth and torpor, the mind drifts “downwards” (that is, we keep losing our energy), or on account of restlessness and remorse, our minds float “upwards” (we become agitated). Either way, the mind is weakened and out of focus with its meditation object. In this connection, the Tiantai⁴⁴ master, **Zhiyi** 智顛 (538-597), in his *Tóngméng zhǐguān* 童蒙止觀 (*Samatha and Vipāśyanā for Beginners*), gives the following tips for dealing with two kinds of distractions:

What is a **sinking mind [sign]**? If during the meditation the mind is dull, confused or unrecordable, while the head drops, this shows a sinking mind. In such a case, it should be fixed on the tip of the nose to nail it there and to prevent it from wandering elsewhere. This is the way to regulate a sinking mind.

What is a **floating mind [sign]**? If during the meditation, it drifts about and is uneasy, while thoughts follow externals, this shows a floating mind. In such a case, it should be pushed down and fixed on the navel to prevent thoughts from rising; thus the mind will be stabilized and will be easily quieted.

Therefore, the absence of the sinking or floating state shows a regulated mind.

(Zhiyi, *Tóngmén Zhǐguān* 童蒙止觀 in Lu K’uan Yü, 1964:126;⁴⁵ emphases added)

何等為沉相？

若坐時心中昏暗，無所記錄，
頭好低垂，是為沈相。
爾時當系念鼻端，
令心住緣中，無分散意，
此可治沈。

何等為浮相？

若坐時心好飄動，身亦不安，
念外異緣，此是浮相。
此時宜安心向下，系緣臍中，
制諸亂念，心即定住，
則心易安靜。

舉要言之，不沈不浮，
是心調相。

Zhiyi’s advice on fixing the attention at the nose-tip is the same as that of **the Paṭisambhidā, magga** and **Vibhaṅga**, which interprets *parimukha* as meaning “at the tip of the nose or at the centre of the upper lip.”⁴⁶ His advice on watching the navel is remarkably similar to the Vipassana method of Mahasi Sayadaw.⁴⁷

3 Removal of *uddhacca, kukkucca*

3.1 FREEDOM FROM UDDHACCA, KUKKUCCA IS BLISSFUL. The Sutta Nipāta contains a number of verses relating to remorse. **The Tuvaṭṭaka Sutta** (Sn 4.14), for example, mentions freedom from remorse together with various aspects of restraint in speech, which covers being free from anger, boasting and arrogance, as well as the use of moderate words:

Akkodhano asantāsī
avikatthī akukkucco
manta, bhāṇī amuddhato

Without anger, without trembling,
not boasting, without remorse,
speaking moderation,⁴⁸ not restless.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Tiāntái 天臺.

⁴⁵ Also called *Xīxi zhǐguān zuòchán fǎyào* 修習止觀坐禪法要 = *Xiǎozhǐguān* 小止觀, T1915 = T46.462-474. See Lu K’uan Yü 1969: 126 & Zhiyi 1997. For Chin text: <http://www.ucchusma.idv.tw/chanzong/small.htm>.

⁴⁶ Pm 1:171,19; Vbh 537/252,13. For further discussion, see **Ānāpāna, sati S** (M 118) = SD 7.13 Intro (2.4), & **Satipaṭṭhāna Ss** (D 22; M 10) = SD 13 Intro (3.9d).

⁴⁷ See **Ānāpāna, sati S** (M 118) = SD 7.13 Intro (2.4.2).

⁴⁸ Alt tr “a speaker of wisdom” foll Comys: *mantā vuccati paññā*, “wisdom is called *mantā* (mantra)” (Nm 1:219, 2:346; DA 669, 852, 892; AA 3:329; DhA 4:93; SnA 2:402; ThaA 1:33; ThīA 219; ApA 275); cf *sammīta*, -*bhāṇī*, “moderate in speech” (Tha 209d). On *manta, bhāṇī* (Tha 2, 117; Thī 281) as “speaking in moderation,” as

sa ve vācāyato muni

he is indeed a speech-restrained sage.

(Sn 850)

Another Sutta Nipāta verse, found in **the Purābheda Sutta** (Sn 4.10), relates the removal of remorse to the diligent practice of meditation in secluded spots:

*Jhāyī na pāda, lol'assa
virame kukkucam, na-p, pamajjeyya
atha āsanesu sayanesu
appasaddesu bhikkhu vihareyya*

The monk should be a meditator, not foot-loose.
Refraining from remorse,⁵⁰ he would not be heedless.
And in places for sitting and lying down
where there is little noise, he would dwell. (Sn 925)

Though these verses do not show any explicit relation between the removal of remorse and these other qualities, the fact that they appear together clearly suggests that they are conducive to effective meditation. Indeed, we would expect one who consistently dwells in peaceful solitude, diligent in his efforts, and letting go of the past (keeping away remorse), would succeed in his meditation.

3.2 FACTORS THAT HELP TO REMOVE UDDHACCA, KUKKUCCA. The Commentaries speaks of six things that are conducive to the removal of restlessness and remorse,⁵¹ which are:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (1) deep learning | (<i>bahussutatā</i>) |
| (2) constant questioning | (<i>paripucchakatā</i>) |
| (3) being well versed in the Vinaya | (<i>vinaye pakataññutā</i>) |
| (4) associating with the elders | (<i>vuddha, sevītā</i>) |
| (5) spiritual friendship | (<i>kalyāna, mittatā</i>) |
| (6) conducive conversation | (<i>sappāya, kathā</i>) |

The Majjhima Commentary explains “deep learning” as the mastering of the Suttas (in the five Nikāyas). The rest of the factors are interpreted in connection with monastic discipline. A monk should constantly question over what is allowable and what is not by associating with the elders (especially Vinaya experts such as Upāli). He should cultivate spiritual friendship with them and have conducive conversations with them (MA 1:285).

The Sāmañña, phala Sutta (D 2) says that the most effective way to overcome the hindrance of restlessness and remorse is to cultivate a mind that is internally calm (*ajjhataṃ vūpasanta citta*).⁵² As such,

orig it was prob *mita, bhāṇī* (Uv 29.45, Uv (Pischel) 55, Uv: T Beckh 49): see John Brough Dh:G 1962: 249, 280; Tha: N 117n (ad Tha 2); Thī: N 281n (ad Thī 281).

⁴⁹ Here, an allusion to *kukkucca*: see native gloss, where *anuddhato* means “without restlessness” (*anuddhato ti uddhacca, rahito*, SnA 549,13). Alt tr “nor arrogant” (Tha: N). Uv 26.8b reads *na vikanthxi na kaukr̥ṭiḥ* (which supports my reading). See also J Brough Dh:G 1962: 280, which I follow.

⁵⁰ On the ending of *kukkucca*, see: *ajjhataṃ vūpasanta, citta ~ā cittaṃ parisodheti*, “the mind that is internally stilled is a mind purified of remorse” (D 1:71,28 = M 1:81,22 = A 2:211,3 = Vbh 245,1 = Pug 59,22); *uddhacca, kukkucassa pi suppaṭiviniṭatā na andh'andham viya jhāyati*, “his restlessness and remorse have not been fully removed, so that he meditates, as it were, dimly” (M 127.16/3:151,30); *uddhacca, kukkucāñ ca me suppaṭiviniṭam*, “and thoroughly removed restlessness and remorse” (S 46.8/5:76,26); *bhikkhuno abhijjhā vigatā hoti ... uddhacca, kukkucāñ vigatā hoti*, “for a monk... covetousness has departed... restless and remorse have departed” (It 118,-14); *te... avikkhepena uddhacca, kukkucāñ pahāya gatā*, “they had abandoned restlessness and remorse through non-wavering” (UA 129,9); *uddhacca, kukkucāñ... pahāya pajahitvā vinoditvā*, “having given up, dispelled restlessness-and-remorse, it is abandoned” (Nm 19,28); *iti idaṇ ca uddhaccam idaṇ ca kukkucam santā honti samitā vūpasantā atthaṅgatā abbhathān, gatā appitā vyappitā sositā visositā vyantikātā, tena vuccati ~am pahāyā ti*, “thus this restlessness and this remorse are calmed, calmed, stilled, settled, disappeared, ended, destroyed, withered, withered out, terminated; therefore, this is called ‘the abandoning of restlessness and remorse’” (Vbh 255,11).

⁵¹ *Cha dhammā ~assa pahānāya samvattanti* (“he brings about the six things for the abandoning of restlessness nad remorse, namely”): *bahussutatā, paripucchakatā, vinaye pakataññutā, vuddha, sevītā, kalyāna, mittatā, sappāya, kathā* (DA 3:781 = MA 1:285,8-22 = SA 3:167,16-30 = AA 1:50,26-51,11 = ItA 2:181 = VbhA 273 f; *idaṃ ~am nāma mahā, anatta, karan ti cha dhamme bhāvetvā pajahati*, “having cultivated six things, he abandons this doer of great harm called restlessness and remorse” (DA 216,20 (DAPT 1:339,17-21)).

⁵² D 2.678/1:72 = SD 8.10.

notes **the (Nīvaraṇa Bojjhaṅga) Āhāra Sutta** (S 46.51), this hindrance stands in direct opposition to the awakening-factor of tranquillity (*passaddhi sambojjhaṅga*).⁵³ **The (Līna Uddhatta) Aggi Sutta** (S 46.53) adds that other awakening-factors that should be cultivated when the mind is restless are concentration and equanimity.⁵⁴ In this way, restlessness can gradually be overcome, like throwing water and earth into a great fire to put it out.

Even at a high level of spiritual development, there is a need to remove restlessness and remorse. A good example is **the (Arahatta) Anuruddha Sutta** (A 3.128), which recounts Sāriputta's well known instructions to Anuruddha. The latter complains to Sāriputta that in spite his having unshaken energy, well-founded mindfulness, bodily tranquillity and mental one-pointedness, he is still unable to reach liberation from the influxes.⁵⁵

In reply, Sāriputta remarks that Anuruddha's obsession with having energy, mindfulness, tranquillity and mental one-pointedness is simply a manifestation of *restlessness*, and his concern about not having reached the destruction of the influxes was merely *remorse*. Once Anuruddha recognizes how restlessness and remorse are obstructing him in this way, he is able to realize direct knowledge of liberation.

3.3 THE JOY OF DOING NOTHING. In terms of contemporary urbanized society, it helps to understand the hindrance of restlessness and remorse as the failure to appreciate *contentment*, that small is beautiful and that doing nothing at the right time is a joyful experience. Most people swallowed up by the lonely business of urbanized society do not seem able to acknowledge the pleasure of simply being themselves, doing nothing.⁵⁶

When we are part of a group, as in an urban society, we tend to see faults in others who are different from us, or who disagree with us. This leads us to become restless and stressful. And when we notice there are others apparently ahead of us in material way or in terms of status symbols (cash, credit cards, cars, country-club membership, and a condominium),⁵⁷ then we are likely to worry about being left behind. We might even become remorseful and blame ourselves for being incompetent or even a failure. We are living by external standards, taking others as our measure of life-quality. But people's tastes and fortunes change, so such standards are really false. Happiness is an inner joy, and can only be truly experienced within ourselves through self-understanding.

Similarly, restlessness in meditation is a symptom of not seeing the joy of the present moment, of what is here and now. We start thinking and planning about the future, what to do next, and feel like springing into action. So we become restless.

This is where we need to remind ourselves that the process of meditating is just the opposite of what we do in our routine of work, socializing, even recreation. In a way, meditation is our permitting ourselves to do nothing. If our meditation is the same as our routine life—being busy with all sorts of things and yet not feeling that we are in charge of our lives—then it is *not* meditation.

In olden times, when villagers wanted to catch monkeys, they would use a coconut (bored with a small hole) or some kind of large heavy pot with a narrow neck, and leave a banana or fruit inside. An inquisitive and greedy monkey would then put its hand into the trap and hold on tight onto the fruit. The trapper comes along and easily catches hold of the monkey, slowed down by its grasping onto what it desires. All the monkey need to do is to let go of the fruit and flee to freedom.

3.4 ACCEPTING OURSELVES. Remorse is the result of our wrong conduct in what we said or done, or in what we *thought* we have said or done. When this is directed to someone who is an authority-figure or whom we have high regard, then it become *guilt*.⁵⁸ Both remorse and guilt are the result of how we perceive ourselves and others. They arise because when we habitually measure ourselves against others.⁵⁹

⁵³ S 46.51.12/5:104 = SD 7.15.

⁵⁴ S 46.53.19/5:114.

⁵⁵ A 3.128/1:281 f = SD 19.4.

⁵⁶ See Brahmavamsa 2006: 43-46.

⁵⁷ See **Skillful Means** = SD 30.8 (8.1).

⁵⁸ On the difference btw *guilt* and *fear*, see **Thīna, middha** = SD 32.6 (3.4.3).

⁵⁹ See **Me; The nature of conceit** = SD 19.2a.

It is useful to understand the nature of self and actions here: we are what we do. But all actions (whether mental, verbal or bodily) are impermanent. Even when we have done some terrible evil deeds, we can still change, that is, if we accept the evil as evil, have a great desire to change, and make the effort to do so. Sometimes, someone comes along and gives us a second chance, as it were—we should be humble and joyful in responding positively to such an opportunity.

The best known example of such a miraculous change is that of Anguli,māla, the erstwhile serial killer. He is looking for his last victim, for the thousandth human finger to give as an offering to his foolish teacher, that is, until the Buddha compassionately appears to him and shows him that there is a way out for him. Aṅguli,māla then confesses that he has always thought of goodness, but is unable to access or express it, until the Buddha comes along, telling him to *stop* his evil ways.⁶⁰ The Buddha's teachings and minding methods are still with us. We only need to practise them by stopping our unwholesome habits and cultivating our inner goodness.

3.5 Seeing things as they really us. Restlessness and remorse arises when we do not allow ourselves to see things as they truly are. The mind works very fast so that information that comes to us are often incomplete or are not fully grasped. As a secondary schoolboy, I cycled to school, and noticed the many smaller roads and lanes that led away from the road that I usually took.

My curious mind kept wondering where those roads and lanes led to. During my free time, I would cycle down one of them and go wherever it led. Often I would stop to look closer at the trees and plants, the streams and marshes. It was an exhilarating experience to be up close with nature. Such beauty however could only be felt when I stopped and studied the scenery. Then, happily I would cycle on and on, and then to my surprise, I had reached right where I had started, but a much happier person with a clear sense of inner peace!

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100225; 100301; 100408; 101118

⁶⁰ See *Aṅguli,māla S* (M 86/2:97-105) = SD 5.11.