

Preliminary working transcript of Dhamma talk on MN-59

Presented by Bhante Vimalaramsi

25-Mar-07

BV: Because we're working with the kind of meditation that is a feeling kind of meditation, I thought we would look at this sutta called The Many Kinds of Feeling.

MN: 1. THUS HAVE I HEARD. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Sāvatti in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park.

2. Then the carpenter Pañcakanga went to the venerable Udāyin, and after paying homage to him, he sat down at one side and asked him:

3. "Venerable sir, how many kinds of feeling have been stated by the Blessed One?"

"Three kinds of feeling have been stated by the Blessed One, householder: pleasant feeling, painful feeling, and neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling. These three kinds of feeling have been stated by the Blessed One."

"Not three kinds of feeling have been stated by the Blessed One, venerable Udāyin; two kinds of feeling have been stated by the Blessed One: pleasant feeling and painful feeling. This neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling has been stated by the Blessed One as a peaceful and sublime kind of pleasure."

A second time and a third time the venerable Udāyin stated his position, and a second time and a third time the carpenter Pañcakanga stated his. But the venerable Udāyin could not convince the carpenter Pañcakanga nor could the carpenter Pañcakanga convince the venerable Udāyin.

4. The venerable Ānanda heard their conversation. Then he went to the Blessed One, and after paying homage to him, he sat down at one side and reported to the Blessed One the entire conversation between the venerable Udāyin and the carpenter Pañcakanga. When he had finished, the Blessed One told the venerable Ānanda:

5. "Ānanda, it was actually a true presentation that the carpenter Pañcakanga would not accept from Udāyin, and it was actually a true presentation that Udāyin would not accept the carpenter Pañcakanga. I have stated two kinds of feeling in one presentation; I have stated

three kinds of feeling in another presentation; I have stated five kinds of feeling in another presentation;

BV: Five kinds of feeling - let's do it this way. In Pāli it's dukkha, sukha, domanassa, somanassa, upekkhā. Dukkha, is a painful physical feeling. Sukkha is a pleasant physical feeling. Domanassa is a painful mental feeling. Somanassa is a pleasant mental feeling. Upekkhā is equanimity.

MN: I have stated six kinds of feeling in another presentation;

BV: The six kinds of feeling are at each one of the sense doors. When a feeling arises at the eye, at the ear, nose, tongue, body, mind.

MN: I have stated eighteen kinds of feeling in another presentation; I have stated thirty-six kinds of feeling in another presentation; I have stated one hundred and eight kinds of feeling in another presentation.

BV: I'm not going to go into these.

MN: That is how the Dhamma has been shown by me in [different] presentations.

"When the Dhamma has thus been shown by me in [different] presentations, it may be expected of those who will not concede, allow, and accept what is well stated and well spoken by others that they will take to quarreling, brawling, and disputing, stabbing each other with verbal daggers. But it may be expected of those who concede, allow, and accept what is well stated and well spoken by others that they will live in concord, with mutual appreciation, without disputing, blending like milk and water, viewing each other with kindly eyes.

BV: What we're talking about here, stabbing each other with verbal daggers seems to be the way that a lot of people discuss Buddhism and what the Buddha taught. And everybody has their own philosophy. They have their own ideas of what they think the Buddha taught. One of the reasons that I spend so much time reading the suttas, is so that you get the idea that it's not my philosophy. It is not my ideas. This is not my way of doing anything. This is what the Buddha said. And this is as close as we can come to the actual teaching of the Buddha.

The more we go back to the original teaching and start looking at all of the instruction that the Buddha gave, we will begin to have a practice that is immediately effective. And it's easy, to see, that the Buddha's path is a way of developing and changing your personality, so that it becomes softer, more open, more accepting, kinder.

The whole point of the Buddha and his teaching was, to show people how to have an uplifted mind, not how to quarrel with each other. During the time of the Buddha, he was teaching not only nobles, and

kings and princes and all of these rich families, but he was also teaching common farmers. Now what he taught had to be understood very easily by the farmers, or else they would not have tried the practice. It had to be easy to understand, and it had to work fairly quickly, or else they wouldn't trouble themselves.

Now, I've read in some commentaries that from the time that the Buddha started until he died, which was forty five years later, that he affected somewhere around sixty million people, with his teaching. That wasn't all just the Buddha; it was the monks that went out and they were teaching the Buddha's path too. But they didn't teach the Buddha's path until they saw directly, what the Buddha was teaching. And their confidence became so strong that it was unshakable.

Right now, there's an awful lot of people that want to be teachers. But they'll study for a little while, they'll do a few retreats, and they they'll claim that they're a teacher, and the only true teacher that I know of, is the Buddha. And when you go back to the original teaching, then everything starts to become more and more clear, This is one of the reasons that I'm continually reading the suttas, because the Buddha is the teacher. I'm not the teacher. I'm a guide. I can understand and I can see what's happening with your practice, but we can always go back to the suttas, to see what the Buddha said about that. So the Buddha is the teacher, and the closer we can stay with the teachings in the suttas, the easier and faster our progress becomes, the deeper your understanding will become, because of the Buddha's teaching. You don't need to add anything, you don't need to subtract anything. All you need to do is go to the original teaching and follow the directions as closely as possible.

So, when the Buddha was giving all of these discourses, he gave a lot of discourses to monks; he gave a lot of discourses to laymen. The monks, he would generally spend a little bit more time with and go in to more depth, because, that's the profession of being a monk. Being a monk means that you have more time to study. You have more time to practice. You have more time to see for yourself what the Buddha was talking about.

It is a real good idea that any time any one is using a commentary, to take that commentary and compare it with what it says in the suttas themselves. If the commentary does not agree with what the suttas say, it's best not to use that commentary very much. It might have some great points in it, but if by and large there are mistakes when you

compare it with the original teaching, then it will only cause confusion, and cause more misunderstanding about what the emphasis of the practice is. So if you take the commentaries, and you put them on the shelf, where they belong, just as reference to see, and go to the original teachings, you might find that the kind of practice that you've been using for, however many years, doesn't really agree so well with what the suttas are teaching. An example of this is the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, and the directions in the mindfulness of breathing in that sutta, and I'll read to you what the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta says. This is not my interpretation, this is what the sutta says. It says:

MN-10: (CONTEMPLATION OF THE BODY)

(1. Mindfulness of Breathing)

BV: This is section number 4, in sutta number 10, in the Middle Length Sayings.

MN-10: 4. "And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu abide contemplating the body as a body? Here a bhikkhu, gone to the forest or to the root of a tree or to an empty hut, sits down; having folded his legs crosswise, set his body erect, and established mindfulness in front of him, ever mindful he breathes in, mindful he breathes out. Breathing in long, he understands: 'I breathe in long'; or breathing out long, he understands: 'I breathe out long.' Breathing in short, he understands: 'I breathe in short'; or breathing out short, he understands: 'I breathe out short.'

BV: Now the first two sentences here are talking about understanding that you know what the breath is doing. It's nothing to do with breath body, it has to do with the breath, itself. You understand when you take a long breath, you understand when you take a short breath. It does not say to focus only on the breath; it does not mention your nostril, your nostril tip, your upper lip, or your abdomen. It just says: "You know when you take a long breath, and when you take a short breath." Now we get into the actual instructions on the meditation.

MN-10: He trains thus:

BV: These are key words, because this is how you train yourself.

MN-10: 'I shall breathe in experiencing the whole body'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing the whole body.'

BV: This is not body of breath, this is the entire body. Now –

MN-10: He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in tranquillising the bodily formation'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out tranquillising the bodily formation.'

BV: So it's saying that on the in-breath, you tranquilize the bodily formation, on the out-breath, you tranquilize the bodily formation, what does that mean? It means that if there's any tension or tightness anywhere in your body, you relax it on the in-breath, and you relax it on the out-breath. This step has been forgotten, not used, with a lot of people that are practicing meditation today. This step is a very, very important part of the meditation.

There is a tightness, that is very subtle that occurs in the head, around your brain. There's a membrane around your brain, that kind of hold your brain all together. Every time there is any kind of distraction, it contracts. And with that contraction, there's a tension or tightness that arises. On the in-breath, you relax that tension or tightness. On the out-breath, you relax that tension or tightness. When your mind becomes distracted, you notice that your mind is distracted, you let that distraction be there by itself, and relax the tension or tightness caused by mind's attention moving to that distraction. The more you become familiar with how that tension or tightness arises, the easier it is to see that.

Now, what is this tension or tightness that arises? This tension or tightness that arises, is craving. And, every time you let go of craving, you feel your mind expand, and then become calm. Every time you let go of craving, your mind is pure, at that time. Your awareness is very sharp. There are no thoughts. There's just this pure awareness. And you bring this pure awareness back to your object of meditation. So every time you let go of tension and tightness, you are letting go of craving, which happens to be the second Noble Truth; the cause of suffering is craving. When you let go of that craving, that purity of mind at that moment, is the cessation of suffering, and, you do this on the in-breath, and you do this on the out-breath. There's a distraction, let the distraction be, relax, bring that pure mind back to your object of meditation, and relax some more. These kind of instructions, need to be followed very closely. This is what I was reading from the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta.

MN-10: Just as a skilled turner or his apprentice, when making a long turn, understands: 'I make a long turn'; or, when making a short turn, understands: 'I make a short turn';

BV: That means that he's not thinking about, he's just doing; he understands.

MN-10 so too, breathing in long, a bhikkhu understands: 'I breathe in long'

BV: So, when you start following the directions of the Buddha, with the mindfulness of breathing, we can also carry these same directions over to the practice of Loving-Kindness. Any time there is a distraction, and your mind's attention moves from the feeling of Loving-Kindness and making a wish for happiness. to that distraction, whatever it happens to be, there is tension and tightness that arises at that time. You allow the feeling to be there by itself, and relax. Bring that clear pure mind back to the feeling of Loving-Kindness, making a wish for happiness.

When you're practicing Loving-Kindness meditation, you want to feel the wish that you are making. May I be happy. You know what it feels like to be happy. Take that happy feeling. Put it in the center of your heart, and radiate that feeling to yourself, or to your spiritual friend. You know what it feels like to be peaceful and calm. Feel that peace and calm. Put that feeling in your heart and surround yourself with that feeling, and radiate that feeling. There are times when your mind can feel kind of dull, or cloudy, so you make a wish for a very clear mind, an observant mind, an accepting mind.

Whatever wish you make, you want to feel that wish. Bring it into your heart, and radiate that wish out. When you're radiating Loving-Kindness to your spiritual friend, you want to put your spiritual friend right in the middle of your heart. Make a wish for their happiness, feel that wish, surround them with that feeling, and give them a great big heart hug, and then radiate that feeling.

So, when we're talking about the many different kinds of feeling, and this meditation is not an intellectual kind of meditation, this is a feeling meditation. When you're doing this practice, you want to practice smiling. You want to smile with your mind; smile with your eyes, even though your eyes are closed. Put a little smile on your lips, and a smile in your heart.

Any time you see that you are not smiling, you don't criticize yourself, you don't come down on yourself because you forgot. All you do is start over again. This is a practice of "Play it Again." So, the more you can notice when you're staying with your meditation and smiling, the easier the practice becomes, and the more fun you start to have with this practice. I know it's kind of an unusual thing to talk about meditation and fun in the same breath because we've had this idea brought to this

country that meditation is serious stuff, and we better be serious right along with it. But actually, it's more fun to have fun. It's more fun to radiate a happy feeling, and it's much easier to radiate that happy feeling when you're having fun doing it.

So, getting back to the sutta. And, one of the things that I've noticed over the years, since coming back from Asia, is that not only are there a lot of people that are super serious, and they have a tendency to argue about what the Buddha taught, but they tend to take the practice of sitting meditation as the only real form of meditation. Meditation is a practice of watching how mind's attention moves from one thing to another. It's an all the time practice; it's not just while you're sitting. While you're doing your sitting meditation, that's your close examination time of how mind's attention moves, from one thing to another. But when you get up from your (sitting) meditation that doesn't mean that you let go of your meditation. (and) you stop watching what your mind does, and just act like you normally act. Meditation is mental development all of the time. And the closer you can stay with your smile, and practice of giving your smile away with uplifted thoughts, the easier life becomes, all the way around. You start having more and more balance in your life, and that's what the Buddha was teaching, how to have equanimity with what ever arises, not getting caught in the emotional roller coasters.

Now, and interesting thing about this particular sutta is that the Buddha starts describing all different kinds of feeling, and we start first at sensual pleasures, he called these kind of low and not very profitable. And then he goes through all of the different jhānas. Now jhānas are not states of concentration. Jhāna is a Pāli word, and it means a level of understanding. And the understanding comes from your being able to observe how mind's distractions pull our attention away from our object of meditation. I'll get more into that in a little bit.

MN-59: 6. "Ānanda, there are these five cords of sensual pleasure. What are the five? Forms cognizable by the eye that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire and provocative of lust. Sounds cognizable by the ear that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire and provocative of lust. Odours cognizable by the nose that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire and provocative of lust. Flavours cognizable by the tongue that are wished

for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire and provocative of lust. Tangibles cognizable by the body that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire and provocative of lust. These are the five cords of sensual pleasure. Now the pleasure and joy that arise dependent on these five cords of sensual pleasure are called sensual pleasure.

BV: I'm glad he made that clear.

MN: 7. "Should anyone say: 'That is the utmost pleasure and joy that beings experience,' I would not concede that to him. Why is that? Because there is another kind of pleasure loftier and more sublime than that pleasure. And what is that other kind of pleasure? Here, Ānanda, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by (thinking and examining) thought, with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion. This is that other kind of pleasure loftier and more sublime than the previous pleasure.

BV: Now what happens when you're practicing meditation, is that there are these five things that are called hindrances that arise, and when they arise, they take your full attention away from your meditation. When you first start meditating, you can have your mind become distracted for fairly long periods of time, two or three, or five minutes, before you actually notice that your mind is distracted. But as soon as you notice, if you let that distraction be there by itself – what that means is that you don't continue watching it; you don't continue thinking about it; you don't continue trying to control it; you just let it be there by itself; take your attention away from that – what you do then is relax the tension and tightness caused by mind's attention moving over to that distraction. Now, you smile, and re-direct your attention back to your object of meditation, which is Loving-Kindness, feeling of radiation in your heart, making a wish for your friend's happiness, and smiling into that. That is how you purify your mind. This is part of the eight fold path, that part that's called right effort by most people, I call it harmonious practice. Right effort is noticing that your mind is on an unwholesome object, letting go of that unwholesome object and relaxing, bringing up a wholesome object, smiling, and directing your mind to a wholesome object, Loving-

Kindness, and keeping that wholesome object going. This is the part of the meditation that is purifying your mind, so that you will be able to experience these deeper states of getting into jhānas. The way you get into a jhāna is, by noticing that these hindrances have something in common. They are all, where your false belief, in a self, arises. A hindrance, when it arises, we have a tendency to take it personally, and hold on to it, and try to control the feeling, with our thoughts. Now the psychophysical process is made up of five different things. You have a physical body; you have feeling: pleasant; unpleasant; neutral. You have perception. Perception is the part of the mind that names things. You see these, and your mind says these are glasses. That was a part of your mind that recognized those. It also has to do with memory. Now you have thoughts, and then you have consciousness. So these five things make up the psychophysical process.

What our mistake always is, is when a feeling arises, let's say it's a painful feeling, what we immediately try to do is think the feeling, and control the feeling with the thoughts. But that doesn't work. What happens is, when you try to control the feeling with the thoughts, the feeling starts to get bigger and more intense. And then you try to control even more. Now this is how depression arises. This is how anxiety arises. This is how all of our negative emotional states arise. A feeling arises, and then we try to control the feeling with our thoughts. But it doesn't work. We know that, for a fact.

So what we need to do is first, let go of the thoughts. Let the thoughts be. Don't keep your attention on all of those thoughts, stories, concepts, ideas. Let the thought be, and relax. Now you'll see that the feeling is there. It's a painful feeling, and you have this tight mental fist wrapped around the feeling. The tight mental fist is aversion. You don't want that feeling to be there. You don't like that feeling. You want it to be different than it is. But the truth is, when a feeling arises, it is there. What you do with what arises in the present moment, dictates what happens in the future. If you're fighting with what arises in the present moment, you can look forward to a lot of suffering, not only now, but in the future. Or, if you see the feeling as it really is – it's a painful feeling... Yes; so what? So it's painful.

By your allowing that feeling to be there, and not trying to control the feeling with the thoughts, that feeling loses its emergency. It loses the want to change it, right here, right now. And it takes a lot of the suffering out of the want to control. You let go of the want to control.

You allow the feeling to be there... Now you relax the tension and tightness caused by that craving, like that: "I don't like it." mind. Now you bring this pure mind back to your object of meditation. Now what happens is, that hindrance, is not going to go away right away. It's going to continue arising because of our attachment to it. What is the attachment? The belief that this is me. This is mine. This is who I am. Every time you see the hindrance arise, your attention gets drawn to it, the test of the meditator, is, to, learn, how, to see, how, mind's attention moved, from, being very peaceful and calm on your object of meditation, over to that hindrance. How did that happen? It didn't all of a sudden just jump there. It happened, in a, very orderly way actually. It happened, as a part of a process. And it always happens in the same way. Now your job as a meditator is to begin to recognize how that works. So as you take more interest in how this process works, as you become more familiar, with, bouncing back and forth between your, hindrance and your object of meditation, you start to recognize little things that happened before your mind('s attention) got pulled away, from that, object, by that hindrance. So you start recognizing it more quickly. You start letting it go a little bit, more quickly, and eventually, you start noticing what happened right before then. And what happened right before then.

As you begin to let go of your hindrances, whatever hindrance it is that arises, it becomes weaker and weaker, as you don't identify with it any more, as you purify your mind, until finally that hindrance becomes so weak, that, it just won't arise any more. When that happens, you will feel a very strong sense of relief. Right after that relief, you feel, very strong joy. And this joy is, uplifting joy is what it's called. You feel very light in your mind, and you feel very light in your body. When this feeling arises, what do you do? When it first happens, you grab on to it, and say: "This is great stuff, I love it, I want it to stay." The harder you hold on to it, the faster it disappears.

So what is your job? Your job as a meditator is to notice that this is a different kind of feeling. Now it's a pleasant feeling. So, now you, let that feeling be, and you come back to your object of meditation. That feeling will eventually change, and it will fade away. When it does, you feel very, very strong tranquility, very peaceful, very calm. And you feel more comfort in your mind and your body, both, than you had before. Your mind stays on your object of meditation very nicely, very easily, without any effort. You can still have distracting thoughts arise, but

you'll see them, after one thought. Let it be, relax, come back without any effort at all.

What I've described to you is what the sutta just described. That is the first jhāna. That is what you can learn to expect, to have happen. This happens because you're beginning to understand how the process of mind's attention is moving from one thing to another. You're starting to see it more clearly. And every time you let go of the tension and tightness caused by that mind's attention moving, you are letting go of, craving. So

repeats (...that other kind of pleasure loftier and more sublime than the previous pleasure.)

MN: 8. "Should anyone say: 'That is the utmost pleasure and joy that beings experience,' I would not concede that to him. Why is that? Because there is another kind of pleasure loftier and more sublime than that pleasure. And what is that other kind of pleasure? Here, Ānanda, with the stilling of (thinking and examining) thought, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the second jhāna, which has self-confidence and singleness of mind without applied and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born of concentration. This is that other kind of pleasure loftier and more sublime than the previous pleasure.

BV: So as you are in the first jhāna, and you have all of this joy, and then you experience the happiness and peace of mind, eventually your mindfulness is going to slip. It's going to get weak. And when it does, you have another hindrance arise. Now you get to work with this hindrance. And as you start to teach yourself more and more how mind's attention moves, you start letting go of that hindrance more easily. You start letting go of your attachment to those thoughts and feelings that you used to hold as yours, and, as you do that, you start seeing this process, happening again and you start recognizing it, and you start letting go a little bit more easily, until, that hindrance, fades away again. And when that hindrance fades away, another sense of relief, and the joy you experience is much stronger. The uplifting feeling is, much lighter. You feel like you're almost floating in the air when this happens.

Because you're starting to understand more and more clearly how the process of the meditation works, you start to gain a lot of confidence. And with that confidence, you begin to lose your doubt that this is the

right path. With that confidence, you start to feel more and more sure that this really is the right way to do it. Now when you get in to the second jhāna, before, you were verbalizing a wish, for your spiritual friend's happiness. But now, what happens is, you try to make a wish, and you start to feel tension and tightness arising in your head. So, at this point you have to let go of verbalizing the wish. Now you just bring that feeling of peace or tranquility, or clarity, or happiness, and put that in your heart without verbalizing it. This is called, in Buddhist terms, true noble silence, because you don't need to verbalize anymore. That doesn't mean that you won't have verbalization. You still can have some, but these are observation thoughts – your mind has a lot of joy in it right now. Your observation thoughts are thoughts about what is happening in the present moment. It's not what you would like to see happen in the future. It's not about what happened in the past. It's only, a single thought, and it's an observation thought of this is what I'm experiencing right now. It's ok for those kind of thoughts. After your period of joy, then that will fade away the tranquility is much stronger. You feel more and more comfort in your mind and in your body. You feel very composed and collected. Your mind stays on your object of meditation very easily.

So, eventually what happens is your mindfulness again will begin to slip a little bit, because it's not very strong at this point. And when it does, you have another hindrance arise. Now you can start to begin to get a feel of the importance of, having hindrances, arise, because this is where your attachment is. And when you let go of the hindrance, you let go of the attachment. You go deeper into your meditation. So, it's a real important aspect of the meditation.

There are a lot of people that are practicing a kind of meditation, that's called absorption concentration. And this also includes access or neighborhood concentration. When this kind of concentration, or one-pointedness is developed, the force of the one-pointedness stops the hindrances from arising. It suppresses the hindrances; it pushes them down. So the meditator doesn't have the opportunity to see how the hindrances arise. When they get out of their sitting meditation, they can be attacked by the hindrances and not really understand how it happened.

See, the thing with the way the Buddha's teaching us to meditate, is that we recognize these kind of hindrances when they arise, and we become familiar with, the process of the hindrances. We do that when

we're sitting, but, as we all know, hindrances arise any time of the day or night. And when you start to see that process and become more and more familiar with it, you start letting go of the hindrances in your daily life, and that's the advantage of the Buddha's meditation, over the absorption kinds of concentration. So this is a very important aspect of the Buddha's teaching, and in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, when you're talking about the mindfulness of mind objects, the first thing that that sutta talks about, is the five hindrances and how to handle them. And it always comes back to recognizing an unwholesome state, letting go of that unwholesome state and relaxing, bringing up a wholesome state, smiling, and staying with that wholesome state, and it's that way with every one of the hindrances.

So the hindrances are a very necessary part of our practice, because they are teaching us, where our attachments are. And it's teaching us how the process, of their arising, occurs. And this process is definitely, an important aspect of the teaching. It's called the process of Dependent Origination. And this is where you get to see the Four Noble Truths in action. We'll go into that at a later time.

MN: 9. "Should anyone say: 'That is the utmost pleasure and joy that beings experience,' I would not concede that to him. Why is that? Because there is another kind of pleasure loftier and more sublime than that pleasure. And what is that other kind of pleasure? Here, Ānanda, with the fading away as well of rapture, a bhikkhu abides in equanimity, mindful and fully aware, and still feeling pleasure with the body, he enters upon and abides in the third jhāna, on account of which noble ones announce: 'He has a pleasant abiding who has equanimity and is mindful.' This is that other kind of pleasure loftier and more sublime than the previous pleasure.

BV: So what happens now is, you'll be sitting and you have this hindrance, and you're working with the hindrance, and your understanding it much more easily, and your not so involved with it, but you're letting it go and relaxing, and it fades away. You still have that sense of relief, but you don't have the joy arise anymore. You start to feel your mind, has a very strong sense of balance in it, and your mindfulness, is very sharp. You see how mind's attention moves from one thing to another very easily. You have full awareness of what is happening around you. You'll hear people talk, but it doesn't make your mind shake, because you have equanimity in it. You hear cars go by;

you hear doors slam, and it doesn't make your mind shake. You, have this balance of mind, and you still have feeling in the body. You feel if there's an ant walking on you, you'll feel it, but it doesn't make your mind necessarily go to it. Doesn't matter.

As you begin to relax more and more, and you stay with your object of meditation for longer periods of time, that happy feeling, the comfortable feeling, becomes so comfortable in your mind, that you start losing all tension in your mind. When you lose tension in your mind, you lose tension in your body. When you lose tension in your body, there's parts of your body that you won't feel, unless there is contact. By that, I mean you'll be sitting, and all of a sudden, you will say: "I don't have any legs. I don't feel anything." But if I were to come up and touch you, you would feel that. There has to be contact. As you lose tension in your mind, you lose tension in your body. When you lose tension in your body, what you're actually doing, is, not having, the feeling in your body so strong any more. And eventually, you'll ~~~~ so that you don't have any feeling arise in you body. Now this is, what happens in the third jhāna. You're still practicing your Loving-Kindness, but when you start losing feeling in your body, that feeling of radiation in your heart, disappears too. Now you start feeling the radiation coming out of your head. You're still practicing your Loving-Kindness. Why don't we stop [|||] and share some merit then.

*May suffering ones, be suffering free
And the fear struck, fearless be
May the grieving shed all grief
And may all beings find relief.*

*May all beings share this merit that we have thus acquired
For the acquisition of all kinds of happiness.*

*May beings inhabiting space and earth
Devas and nagas of mighty power
Share this merit of ours.*

May they long protect the Buddha's dispensation.

Sadhu . . . Sadhu . . . Sadhu . . .

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The rest of the sutta:

MN: "Should anyone say...And what is that other kind of pleasure? Here, Ānanda, with the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and with the previous disappearance of joy and grief, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the fourth jhāna, which has neither-pain-nor-pleasure and purity of mindfulness due to equanimity. This is that other kind of pleasure loftier and more sublime than the previous pleasure.

11. "Should anyone say...And what is that other kind of pleasure? Here, Ānanda, with the complete surmounting of perceptions of form, with the disappearance of perceptions of sensory impact, with non-attention to perceptions of diversity, aware that 'space is infinite,' a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the base of infinite space. This is that other kind of pleasure loftier and more sublime than the previous pleasure.

12. "Should anyone say...And what is that other kind of pleasure? Here, Ānanda, by completely surmounting the base of infinite space, aware that 'consciousness is infinite/ a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the base of infinite consciousness. This is that other kind of pleasure loftier and more sublime than the previous pleasure.

13. "Should anyone say...And what is that other kind of pleasure? Here, Ānanda, by completely surmounting the base of infinite consciousness, aware that 'there is nothing/ a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the base of nothingness. This is that other kind of pleasure loftier and more sublime than the previous pleasure. [400]

14. "Should anyone say...And what is that other kind of pleasure? Here, Ānanda, by completely surmounting the base of nothingness, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. This is that other kind of pleasure loftier and more sublime than the previous pleasure.

15. "Should anyone say: 'That is the utmost pleasure and joy that beings experience,' I would not concede that to him. Why is that? Because there is another kind of pleasure loftier and more sublime than that pleasure. And what is that other kind of pleasure? Here, Ānanda, by completely surmounting the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the cessation of perception and feeling. This is that other kind of pleasure loftier and more sublime than the previous pleasure.

16. "It is possible, Ānanda, that wanderers of other sects might speak thus: 'The recluse Gotama speaks of the cessation of perception and feeling and he describes that as pleasure. What is this, and how is this?' Wanderers of other sects who speak thus should be told: 'Friends, the Blessed One describes pleasure not only with reference to pleasant feeling; rather, friends, the Tathagata describes as pleasure any kind of pleasure wherever and in whatever way it is found.'"

That is what the Blessed One said. The venerable Ānanda was satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One's words.

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