

# *Vibhaṅga Sutta*

*SN V 45.8 Breaking Down the Path*

*Translated by Bhante Ānanda*

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*Once in Sāvātthi,*

**[The Buddha]**

*“Righteous is this Eight-spoked path monks,  
That I will explain and break down to you.*

*Listen carefully and apply your mind to what I will say.”*

*“Yes Bhante” replied the monks.*

*The Awakened One spoke thus:*

*What is this Righteous Eight-Spoked Path?*

*It is here as follows:*

*Wise Understanding*

*Wise Attitude*

*Wise Speech*

*Wise Behavior*

*Wise Living*

*Wise Practice*

*Wise Awareness*

*Wise Meditation<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> *Sammā Samādhi: Mental stillness, composure or collectedness.*

# *Wise Understanding*

*What is this wise understanding?*

*That is:*

*Knowing what is unwholesome;  
Knowing the increase of the unwholesome;  
Knowing the release from the unwholesome;  
Knowing the way to release the unwholesome.*

*This is called wise understanding.*

# *Wise Attitude*

*What is wise attitude?*

*That is,*

*The attitude of contentment.  
The attitude of non-anger.  
The attitude of harmlessness.*

*This is called wise attitude.*

# *Wise Speech*

*And what is wise speech?*

*That is,*

*Abstaining from false speech,  
Abstaining from spiteful speech,  
Abstaining from unkind speech,  
Abstaining from senseless talk.*

*This is called wise speech.*

# Wise Behavior

*And what is wise behavior?*

*That is,*

*Abstaining from mistreating living beings,  
Abstaining from taking what is not given  
Abstaining from [Sexual misconduct].<sup>2</sup>*

*This is called wise behavior.*

# Wise Living

*What is wise living?*

*That is,*

*A righteous meditator abandons wrong modes of living  
And shapes a life by right modes of living.*

*This is called wise living.*

# Wise Practice

*What is wise practice?*

*[Guarding<sup>3</sup> from Unwholesome States]*

- (1) One generates the intention for the non-emergence of inexistent,  
unfavorable, unwholesome states of mind.  
One endeavors with determination,  
strives and supports this with one's mind.*

*[Abandoning Unwholesome States]*

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<sup>2</sup> This "celibacy" here is meant for the monks or very advanced practitioners. In "normal" terms, this is abstaining from wrong sexual activity, meaning, activity that is proper and not causing harm to anyone.

<sup>3</sup> Guarding, protecting awareness.

- (2) *One generates the intention for the abandonment of existent, Unfavorable, unwholesome states of mind.  
One endeavors with determination,  
strives and supports this with one's mind.*

*[Bringing up Wholesome States]*

- (3) *One generates the intention for the emergence of inexistent, Wholesome states of mind.  
One endeavors with determination,  
Strives and supports this with one's mind.*

*[Maintaining Wholesome States]*

- (4) *One generates the intention for the persistence of already emerged wholesome states, For their non-confusion, Growth, Maturation, Development and culmination.  
One endeavors with determination,  
strives and supports this with one's mind.*

*This is called wise practice.*

# *Wise Awareness*

*What is wise awareness?*

- (1) *One meditates, observing body as body,  
Intent, fully aware and present,  
Abandoning worldly desire and regret.*
- (2) *One meditates, observing feeling as feeling,  
Intent, fully aware and present,  
Abandoning worldly desire and regret.*
- (3) *One meditates, observing mind as mind,  
Intent, fully aware and present,  
Abandoning worldly desire and regret.*
- (4) *One meditates, observing Dhamma as Dhamma,  
Intent, fully aware, present,  
Abandoning worldly desire and regret.*

*This is called wise awareness*

# Wise Meditation

*What is wise meditation?*

- (1) *Disengaging oneself from the outward desire  
and detaching oneself from unwholesome mental states,  
Attended by thinking and imagination  
With the joy and happiness born of mental detachment  
One understands and abides in the first level of meditation.<sup>4</sup>*
  
- (2) *With the calming of thinking and imagining,  
With inner tranquilization,  
With the mind becoming unified,  
Unattended by thinking and imagination  
With joy and happiness born of samādhi,<sup>5</sup>  
One understands and dwells in the second level of meditation.*
  
- (3) *One abides in bliss, unclenching, balanced,  
Present and fully comprehending,  
Experiencing happiness<sup>6</sup> within one's body  
That which the awakened ones describe as:  
"Steady presence of mind."  
"This is a pleasant abiding"  
One understands and abides in the third level of meditation.*
  
- (4) *Leaving behind the notions of happiness and unhappiness.  
With the earlier settling of mental gladness and affliction,  
With neither distress nor excitement,  
Purified by unmoving presence,  
One understands and abides in the fourth level of meditation.*

*This is called wise meditation.*

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<sup>4</sup> *Jhāna: Level of Meditation or understanding.*

<sup>5</sup> *Samādhiṃ Pīṭisukhaṃ: The bliss of mental development, collected mental harmony.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ease with the body.*



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