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Acknowledgements /

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(See page 20, Figure 3.2)

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As with previous web articles, thanks to Michael Ross and Annie Sturgeon for their proof reading and most helpful comments.

Any omission or errors remain, of course, my responsibility.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information given in the text is accurate – and where appropriate, up to date.

However, neither the website provider nor the author will be liable for any loss or damage of any nature occasioned to, or suffered by, any person acting or refraining from acting as a result of reliance on the material contained in this article.

### Re terms in the glossary

Terms in the glossary are generally notated in the text [thus](#). For example:

✿ [Changing the Peg](#)

This article is dedicated to the memory of  
Thich Nhat Hanh  
and  
Happy Continuation Days  
With Thanks and Gratitude

## O.1: PREAMBLE

The Sutra on The Full Awareness of Breathing is quite extensive, and has sixteen basic breathing exercises. These are divided into four groups of four [Hanh2008]. This web article is by way of a brief introduction to the First Eight Breathing Exercises (out of the total of sixteen) – that we can then put into practice right away – as a type of formal meditation.

The Full Sixteen Breathing Exercises are planned for the companion article F 21<sup>1</sup>.

The full text of the sutra I initially found somewhat confusing; yet the essence of the first eight exercises can be followed quite easily, with a little bit of practice. These eight exercises can manifest in various ways, depending on the translation and source. The figure below gives the essence of what we will then be reflecting upon in this article.

<u>FIRST FOUR BREATHING EXERCISES</u>
<u>1.1. Awareness of the in-breath</u> Breathing in, I am aware of my in-breath; Breathing out, I am aware of my out-breath.
<u>1.2. Follow in-breath and outbreath all the way through</u> Breathing in, I follow my in-breath all the way through; Breathing out, I follow my out-breath all the way through.
<u>1.3. Becoming aware of our body</u> Breathing in I am aware of my whole body; Breathing out, I am aware of my whole body.
<u>1.4 Calming of the body</u> Breathing in, I calm my body; Breathing out, I calm my body.
<u>SECOND FOUR BREATHING EXERCISES</u>
<u>2.5 Generating Joy</u> Breathing in, I feel joy; Breathing out, I feel joy.
<u>2.6 Aware of happiness (well-being)</u> Breathing in I feel happy; Breathing out I feel happy.
<u>2.7 Awareness of Pain / Suffering</u> Breathing in, I am aware of a painful feeling; Breathing out, I am aware of a painful feeling.
<u>2.8 Calming painful feelings – Calming inner distress</u> Breathing in, I calm my painful feeling; Breathing out, I calm my painful feeling.
<p>Figure 0.1            The First Eight Breathing Exercises of the Full Awareness of            Breathing Sutra            Based on Hanh 2014 p 85</p>

<sup>1</sup> F 21 Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing – Reflections and Practice of the First Sixteen Exercises. This will especially focus on the Breathing Exercises 9 to 16.

These Breathing Exercises are also covered in the Buddha's teaching on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness; it is only recently that I have realised that the teachings within:

- ❖ The Sutra on The Full Awareness of Breathing [1990 / 2008]; and that of
  - ❖ The Sutra on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness [Hanh 1993] are intimately linked; they inter-are.
- Some of the dynamics of this latter sutra are discussed in 5.3 Appendix III: Some brief reflections on The Sutra on The Four Foundations of Mindfulness.

What follows is based on several sources, including:

- i. A wonderful YouTube recording of around 25 minutes by Thich Nhat Hanh – in which he introduces the first eight of these exercises in a way that I have found very helpful<sup>2</sup>. It will be noted that there are some changes in the wording from 0.1 above, that introduce the idea of smiling – which indeed Thich Nhat Hanh does. It seems to me that the calming of the body comes from the wisdom of the Buddha's Breathing Exercises; it is not primarily because, for example: "I calm my body." The calming comes from the practice; just as our minds tend to settle if we go for a walk in nature; it is nature that brings about the transformation within us, rather than, as it were, us "striving" to become calm. I appreciate that the word "striving" here could be seen as loaded.
- ii. Thich Nhat Hanh's 2008 edition of "Breathe, you are alive! – Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing";
- iii. Hanh 2014: "No Mud; No Lotus";
- iv. Hanh 1998: "The Heart of the Buddha's teachings – *Transforming suffering into peace, joy and liberation.*"
- v. Hanh 1993; Transformation and Healing – *On the Sutra of the Four Establishments (Foundations) of Mindfulness.*

#### Caveat regarding breathing exercises

Breathing exercises have been practised by humans for millennia; and are generally very safe – and in therapeutic and psychotherapy circles are often introduced as an experiential way of dealing with physical and mental distress. This is backed up within neuroscientific circles [E.g.: Dana 2018 Chapter 11: Toning the System with Breath and Sound pp 134-150].

It can happen with some people that if they start focusing on the breath, this may cause distress. For this reason, Williams and Penman in their 2023 book suggest an alternative to a breathing exercise in the early weeks of practice [Williams and Penman 2023 pp 66-75], and this is a grounding practice, which I have found very helpful as a brief (or not so brief) meditation.

Should the reader have concerns regarding the First Four Breathing Exercises, then they are encouraged to practice for a week or more this Grounding Exercise – please see:

🌀 [Section 5.4: Appendix IV: Finding our Ground Meditation](#) pp 31-32.

This approach is also advocated by Mindfulness Now – <https://mindfulnessnow.org.uk/> [e.g. Mindful Monday Support Group for Mindfulness Now Teachers / Therapists on 26 02 2024 when it was guided by Alison Bale – with thanks for her gentle and beautiful reflections and meditations.]

<sup>2</sup> They differ slightly from the more formal original teaching of the Sutra (Hanh 2008). The YouTube version is more in line with Hanh's approach in "No Mud, No Lotus" [Hanh 2014 pp 84-85]

## Part I

### The First Four Breathing Exercises.

These first four exercises start by entirely focusing on the breath – the in-breath and the out-breath. Breathing is a manifestation of our body and aliveness; and breathing carried out skilfully can help to settle a distressed / tense body. The third and fourth exercises specially focus on this calming of the body.

#### 1.1. AWARENESS OF THE IN-BREATH:

	Alternative version Hanh 2014 p 85
Breathing in, I know I am breathing in Breathing out, I know I am breathing out.	Breathing in, I am aware this is an in-breath; Breathing out, I am aware this is an out-breath.

Figure 1.1: First Breathing Exercise

The practice is to have full awareness of the whole in-breath; and then full awareness of the whole outbreath. Our full attention is given to the in-breath, and then our full attention to the outbreath. In order to do this, we need to concentrate fully<sup>3</sup>. Concentration is one of Seven Factors of Awakening [Hanh 1998 pp 214-220].

- ✿ “The exercise is simple; yet the effect can be great” – Hanh 2012 video 4.11.
- ✿ Regret about past; concern about future; dissolves in the concentration of the breath.
- ✿ If we are fully present with the in-breath, our anger or irritation dissipate. The Peg<sup>4</sup> of anger / irritation has been replaced by the full focus on the breath....allowing us to be; that is, Being in the A State.
- ✿ In this way breathing in mindfully following the in-breath “sets you free” [Hanh video at 3 mins 14 seconds].

- ✿ During the in-breath:

“The object of the mind is now the in-breath...”  
Hanh op cit

- ✿ And the same for the out-breath.
- ✿ If the object of our mind is fully on the in-breath; and then the out-breath – we become free of the past (“pursuing the past”) and free of the future “getting lost in the future” [Hanh 1990A; e.g. pp 5-6]. In this way, with the mind fully focused on the breath – anger / irritation dissolves as it can no longer be the object of the mind.

“The object of the mind is now the in-breath...;  
 The object of the mind is now the out-breath....  
 In this way we become free”  
 Hanh 2012 paraphrased

<sup>3</sup> In concentrating fully, we can set ourselves free from “Pursuing the Past” or “Getting lost in the Future” [Hanh 1990 Our Appointment with Life]. We need to be free when making a big decision, which means we are in the A State. (i.e. Not caught up in B or C State, which will often end up in mis-perception of the true situation.) It can pleasant if we are fully present with the breath in and the breath out.

<sup>4</sup> Referring to the ancient Buddhist concept of “[Changing the Peg](#)”.

1.2. FOLLOW IN-BREATH AND OUTBREATH ALL THE WAY THROUGH

In this second exercise, we focus our attention on following the in-breath all the way through, and then the out-breath all the way through.

	Alternative formulation (Hanh 2014 p 85)
Breathing in, I follow my in-breath from the beginning to the end; Breathing out, I follow my out-breath from the beginning to the end.	Breathing in, I follow my in-breath all the way through; Breathing out, I follow my out-breath all the way through.

Figure 1.2 A: Second exercise

‘We are mindful of our whole in-breath, and concentrate and focus on every part of our whole in-breath.....with the energy of concentration; we do the same with the out-breath. We know that we can do these two breaths anytime we like’ [Hanh]. Being mindful of the whole in-breath, and of the whole outbreath, is illustrated schematically in Figure 1.2.

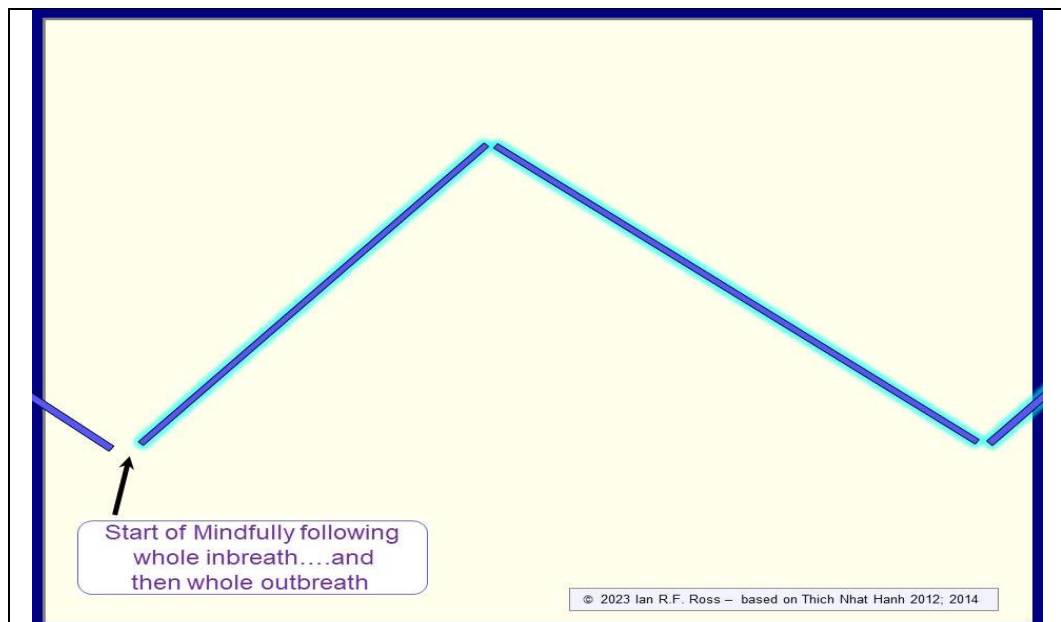


Figure 1.2B  
 Second of the Breathing Exercises  
 Following the whole in-breath; the whole outbreath

*Comments on Figure 1.2B*

- i. The previous out-breath has not been fully followed (on left)
- ii. Mindful breathing following in-breath all the way through; and then out-breath all the way through, starts at arrow – and is indicated by the turquoise illuminated blue lines.
- iii. We continue this exercise (1.2) for several breaths or longer.
- iv. It will be noted that the out-breath here is slightly longer than the in-breath<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Extending the outbreath in this way can increase Ventral Vagal Para-Sympathetic Nervous System activity, and thus us being in the A State (B 28 on Website). This is an option we can try out and see how it feels.



### 1.3. THIRD EXERCISE IS TO BE AWARE OF BODY

Breathing in, I am aware of my body,  
 Breathing out, I am aware of my whole body.  
 Breathing in, I smile to my whole body,  
 Breathing out, I smile to my whole body  
 Hanh 2012 – extrapolated from YouTube and writings of Thich Nhat Hanh

Figure 1.3 Breathing and Body Awareness

Here we bring our mind home to our body; and the mind now becomes an “embodied mind” [6mins 35]. “We are fully present and fully alive” 😊. “We can now live our lives more deeply if body and mind are one.....if body and mind are together”.

Much of the time in our daily lives we “are not truly alive” because we are not in touch with our body. (Instead, we are in the Right Hemisphere thinking / analytical domain, that is “The Matter with Things” – [McGilchrist 2021]; this includes being in the grip of the [Second Arrow](#) ). When we are focused on our computer for an hour or two, we lose touch with our body; this means mind and body effectively become dissociated.

❖ “You are not really alive in that moment” Hanh 2012: 7 mins 25 seconds.

🌀 You can (only) really touch the wonders of life if body and mind are one in this moment [Hanh 2012 paraphrased].

Hanh suggests that we can arrange for a bell of mindfulness to be in our computer, and have it ringing every fifteen to twenty minutes, to ensure we are grounding ourselves in our body.

The oneness of body and mind is what  
 you realise with the third exercise.  
 Hanh 2012 YouTube

“These are the teachings of the Buddha 2,600 years ago” [op. cit. 8 mins 05 seconds].

Oneness of body and mind is crucial for our Well-Being. It can be easy for us to be out of touch with our bodies, and going through life most of the time in our heads – in the analytical sense when we become dissociated from feelings and emotions – and especially feeling tones ([Vedana](#)) that are actually present moment by moment..... [Williams and Penman 2023 – see, for example, pp 3-8].

See Appendix I for Hanh’s further exposition on unifying body and mind.



## 1.4 CALMING OF THE BODY

	Alternative version
Breathing in, I calm my body, Breathing out, I calm my body.  Hanh 2014 p 85	Breathing in, I smile to my body, Breathing out, my body is smiling. Breathing in, I smile to my body, Breathing out, body calming.  Hanh 2012 – adapted by extrapolation from Hanh’s various writings.

Figure 1.4 Breath, smiling, and body calming

In the video, Hanh suggests: “Breathing in, I calm my body ...I release the tension in my body.” He goes on to say that in the outbreath we allow the tension to be released<sup>6</sup> [9 mins]. There are many variations of the Full Awareness of Breathing Sutra. An important aspect is that we adopt a form of words that resonates with our being.

\*\*\* \*\*

If we smile to our body, or imagine smiling to our body, this will be activating those neurocircuits associated with the Ventral Vagal (Para-sympathetic Nervous System) that I have previously notated as the A State [see web article: B 28<sup>7</sup>]. This exercise can calm our body, and in so doing body and mind become united. When we are working in an office, at home, or on a computer, we are often totally in our mind – and this leads to tensions in the body. A mindfulness bell set every 20 minutes or so can allow us to come back to our breathing, to our body becoming one with mind. That is our True Nature – our true [Jen](#). Awareness of our breathing in the context of this sutra on the full awareness of breathing – can axiomatically relieve body tensions.

- ✿ With the outbreath, we allow the tension to be released....
- ✿ With the outbreath, breathed mindfully, the tension of body is released.

### INTERLUDE I

I am writing this in November 2023; the Russian-Ukraine is still ongoing after around 18 months; the terrible events in the Israeli-Palestinian (Hamas) conflict continue. How can we talk about calming the body, calming distressing feeling, for those in war zones and / or starving? At first this may feel absurd – yet Thich Nhat Hanh’s life has in no way been separate from real suffering. Even in times of conflict and great distress world-wide, staying centred can help to calm the human boat in threateningly choppy seas.

❖ See 5.2: Appendix II.

<sup>6</sup> As previously mentioned, the outbreath is associated with increased Ventral Vagal (PSNS) activity, and this in itself will help the body to settle, become calm.

<sup>7</sup> An Experiential Introduction to ABC States of the Polyvagal Theory – *An outline of a brief practical guide developed with students*

**Part II**

**The Second Four Breathing Exercises(5 to 8)**

(Notated as 2.5; 2.6; 2.7; and 2.8 indicating this is the second four of the full Sixteen Exercises)

The first four exercises enable us to develop skills to settle our tense or distressed body. The second four exercises allow us to initially befriend, as it were, our distressed feeling(s), and then bring about a settling and calming of such distress (exercises 2.7 and 2.8). This we have the potential to do, and can do, if we are at this stage in the meditation in a good frame of mind / mental state from an Autonomic Nervous System perspective. i. e. being in the A (ventral vagal) state.

This is the focus of 2.5 and 2.6, in which we can generate both Joy and Happiness / Well-Being; from which we then go on to embrace our distressing / painful feelings; and / or our hurt inner child.

2. 5 GENERATING JOY.....leading to FEELING JOY

Thich Nhat Hanh is very specific in the next two exercises. This one is to generate joy.

	Alternative version
Breathing in I feel joy; Breathing out I feel joy.	Breathing in, joy is generating; Breathing out, joy is present.  Hanh 2012 – adapted by extrapolation from Hanh’s various writings.

Figure 2.5. Breathing and Feeling Joy

A good practitioner knows how to generate a feeling of joy.  
 Hanh 2012 YouTube

The sutra is very subtle; for example, this Exercise 5 is related to how a good practitioner knows how to generate a feeling of joy. His inner being and bodily neuro-physiology are in the Autonomic A State, that of the Ventral Vagal (Para-Sympathetic Nervous System) modality of wholesome social engagement. So from the start of this Second Set of Four Exercises, we are already embracing “[changing the peg](#)”.

See also [Joy and Happiness](#) in Glossary

## 2.6 FEELING HAPPINESS / WELL-BEING:

In this 6<sup>th</sup> exercise we generate Happiness (Well Being). As mentioned above, Thich Nhat Hanh is very specific on this matter. We all have the capacity to create these conditions within us....

	Alternative version
Breathing in I feel happy; Breathing out I feel happy.	Breathing in I feel a sense of Well-Being <sup>8</sup> ; Breathing out, I feel a sense of Well-Being.  Hanh 2012 – adapted by extrapolation from Hanh’s various writings.

Figure 2.6. Breathing Inter-Happiness

This figure, while editing, I have re-labelled as Breathing Inter-happiness. The term happiness can be misunderstood – as discussed by the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu – see [Happiness III](#)<sup>9</sup>. For further pertinent reflections on this exercise and the meaning of happiness, please refer to the glossary: [happiness](#); [ubuntu](#); and Appendix III. If we do not comprehend the true meaning of happiness, this exercise can become problematic / unsettling.

We can recognise that we have all the conditions of happiness right now.... “They are all available” [paraphrasing Hanh 10.10].

Mindfulness helps us to recognise the many  
 conditions of happiness we already have  
 Hanh 2014 p 85  
 Hanh 2012 YouTube

The sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing allows us to live happily in the present moment. See also Hanh 1990A: “Our Appointment with Life – *The Buddha’s Teaching on Living in the Present.*”

“A good practitioner does not look for happiness in the future.....and  
 recognises that all the conditions of happiness are present right  
 now..... Creating happiness is an art; the Art of Happiness”.

Hanh YouTube – paraphrased c 13 mins 30secs

\*\*\* \*\*

<sup>8</sup> Concepts of Happiness and Well-Being [Clow 2006].

<sup>9</sup> From this perspective, true Happiness comes from being mindful and helping others in the community; and being creative in a wholesome sense. Ego-centred happiness is a hollow sham and does not last; and may lead to craving – and wanting more and more. Craving can also manifest in terms desiring fame or fortune. Such approaches are not fundamentally fulfilling.

## 2.7 AWARENESS OF PAIN

### ❖ Awareness of painful feelings

This at first may feel a difficult part of the Breathing sequence; yet with practice we can find it truly liberating. The essence of this exercise is:

	Alternative version
Breathing in, I am aware of painful feelings; Breathing out, I am aware of painful feelings.  Hanh 2014 p 85	

Figure 2.7A. Breathing and Aware of Painful Feelings

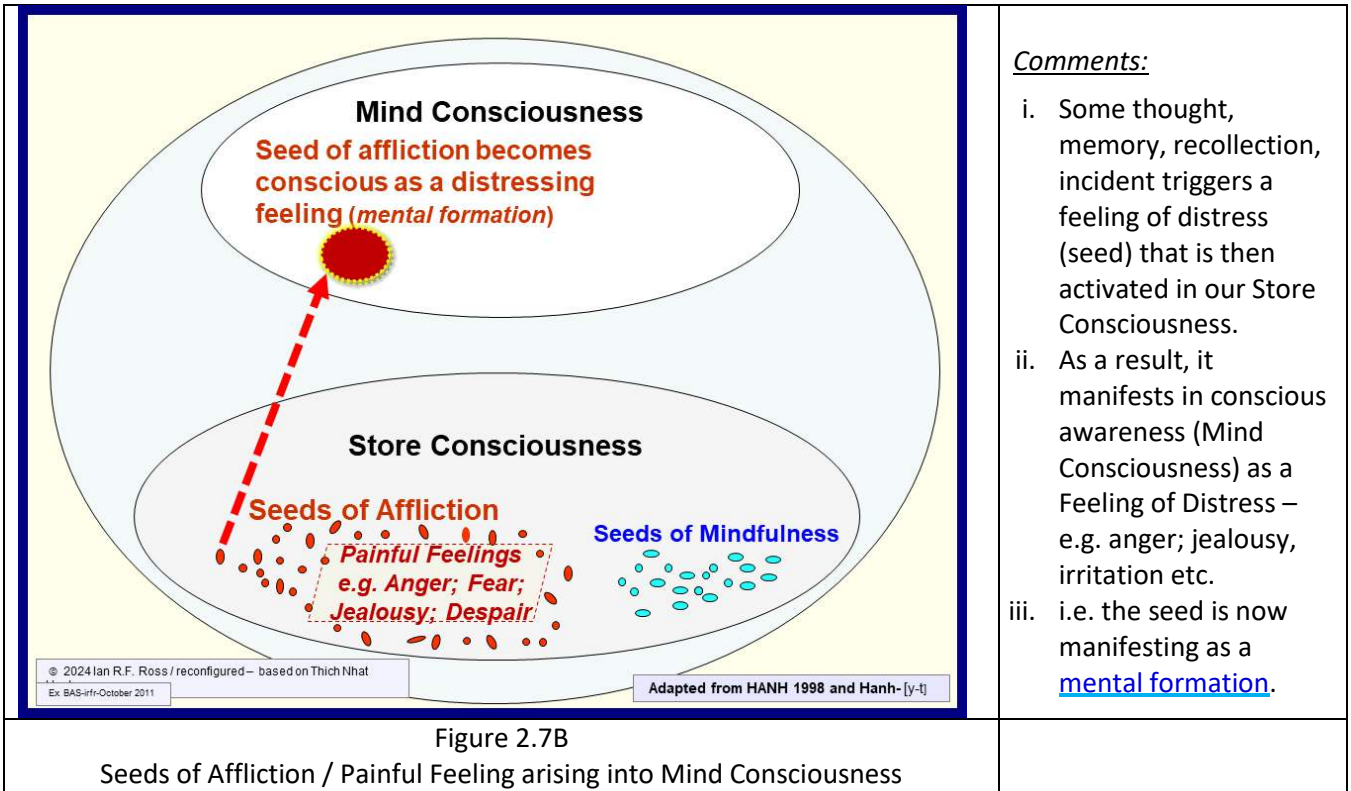
In this 7<sup>th</sup> exercise, we become aware of painful feelings and emotions; they are part of us; no blame; they are part of our neurophysiology. We embrace them, just as a mother / father would embrace their distressed child.

The practitioner does not try to fight the pain; to cover up the pain inside.  
 [Hanh 14 mins 55 seconds]

We do not cover up the pain; rather, “we generate the energy of mindfulness to embrace and befriend the pain – thus embracing the pain tenderly” [based on Hanh sayings and formulations].

Hallo my little pain;  
 I know you are there;  
 I will take good care of you.  
 [Hanh  
 15 mins 27 seconds]

This is whatever the pain is; such as anger, fear, jealousy, irritation, or despair. With the energy of mindfulness, we are taking good care of the inner distress, so that the distressing seed that has arisen from our store consciousness is taken good care of by the energy of mindfulness, as illustrated in Figure 2.7B.



Comments:

- i. Some thought, memory, recollection, incident triggers a feeling of distress (seed) that is then activated in our Store Consciousness.
- ii. As a result, it manifests in conscious awareness (Mind Consciousness) as a Feeling of Distress – e.g. anger; jealousy, irritation etc.
- iii. i.e. the seed is now manifesting as a [mental formation](#).

Figure 2.7B

Seeds of Affliction / Painful Feeling arising into Mind Consciousness

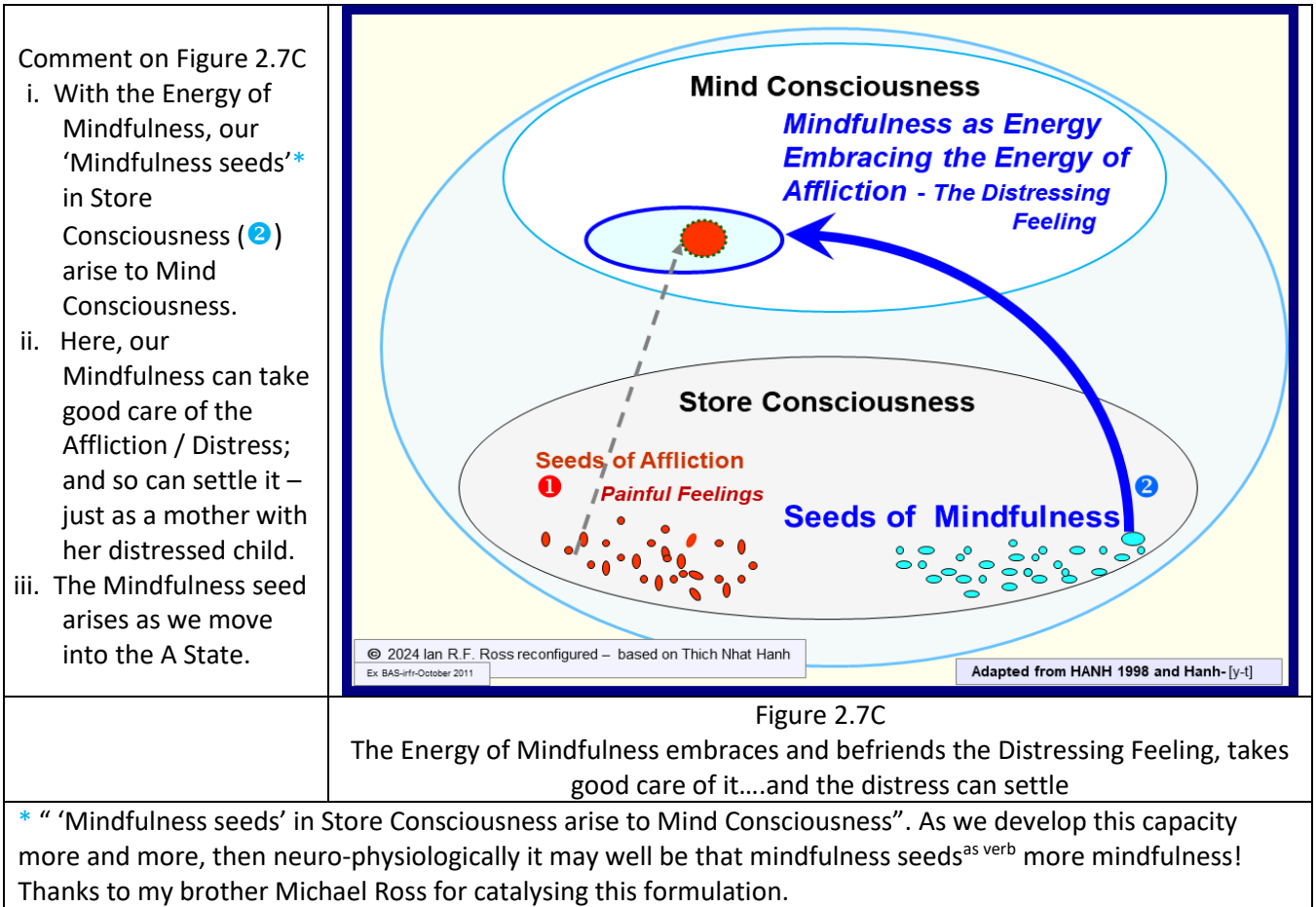


Figure 2.7C

The Energy of Mindfulness embraces and befriends the Distressing Feeling, takes good care of it...and the distress can settle

\* “ ‘Mindfulness seeds’ in Store Consciousness arise to Mind Consciousness”. As we develop this capacity more and more, then neuro-physiologically it may well be that mindfulness seeds<sup>as verb</sup> more mindfulness! Thanks to my brother Michael Ross for catalysing this formulation.

In his classic 24 minute video, Thich Nhat Hanh comes up with this alternative breathing exercise for 2.7:

Breathing in, I know there is a painful feeling, a painful emotion – that is coming up in me.  
 Breathing out, I know there is a painful feeling / emotion within me.

2.7D: Alternative Version of: Breathing and Aware of Painful Feelings  
 Hanh 2012 at 14 mins 23 seconds

In the figure it will be noted that the word emotion twice appears in diminished intensity in print. This is because it seems to me that this part of the Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing is especially referring to feelings / feeling tones / [vedana](#). Explicit emotions are perhaps more the domain of the next series of exercises in the Sutra, those of exercises 9 to 12 (III. Mindfully Observing the Mind in the Mind ([citta](#)), to be discussed in the companion article F 21).

- ✚ This third group of the 16 breathing exercise (9-12) embraces mental formations other than feelings and perceptions [Hanh 2006 p 75; Hanh 1998 p 180]. See also Appendix III – p 27 – which covers the essence of the Sutra on the Four Establishments of Mindfulness, which inter-is with the Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing.

The Sutra of the Full Awareness of Breathing, and that of the Sutra on the Four Establishments of Mindfulness, are descriptions of practical exercises that are in themselves experiential, and therefore essentially modalities by the Right Hemisphere. The texts themselves are axiomatically Left Hemispheric modalities – and so can become rigid and concrete; this is not the experience of life, of [vivencia](#). While this article attempts to be logical, too close attention to any one of the eight (of the sixteen) breathing exercise misses an essential, that all sixteen in reality inter-are.

- ✚ In this respect, it is suggested that if, while practising a Breathing sequence in this series, a slightly different formulation / phrase comes to mind, then adopt this if its essence reflects mindfully the original wording. In this way it can become truly our own.

Returning to Hanh's video: Mindfulness does at least two things:

- i. It recognises the feeling / emotion is present (e.g. Anger; irritation; sadness).
  - ✚ "A simple recognition of the pain." [Hanh 2012: 21 mins 17 secs].
- ii. Embrace the pain [Hanh 2012 21 mins 48 secs].

**The practitioner does not try to fight the pain, to cover up the pain inside.....Halo my little pain; I know you are there; I will take good care of you. We have to be there for our pain.  
 There is no fighting;  
 No violence done to our suffering.**

Hanh  
15mins 39



This seems to me to be crucial, that ‘no violence is done to our pain.’ “Our pain, our suffering, is our baby”. So we take good care of our “hurt inner child”, just as we would as a parent for our distressed child. We have previously illustrated this with the following image – the “teddy-hedgehog” here representing our hurt inner child; our inner pain.



Figure 2.7E

With the energy of mindfulness, we can take good care of our distress, just as a mother or father would with her / his distressed child. Our own inner distress can also be seen in terms of our own hurt inner child, which with mindfulness we can take good CARE of.



Figure 2.7F

**Figures 2.7 E and F**  
**Taking Good Care of our Hurt Inner Child; our Hurt Inner Feelings**

Figures from Figure EARTE A9.2 A and EARTE A9.2B in web article A 11 page 37

Figure EARTE A9<sup>HFV</sup> A

A representation of our inner child – here as a cuddly hedgehog

References

- Hanh, Thich Nhat: 2010. Reconciliation – Healing the Inner Child ISBN 978-1-935209-64-5
- Hebb Donald O. 1949 Organization of Behavior: a neuropsychological theory ISBN 0-8058-4300-0
- Winnicott D.W. 1965. The maturational process and the facilitating environment ISBN 0 946 439 84 2

Figure EARTE A9<sup>HFV</sup> B

Bringing our hurt inner child, here represented by the hedgehog, to our heart and holding / cradling her / him

\*\*\* \*\*

...the energy of mindfulness generated by our practice is the loving mother

Hanh  
 16mins 09

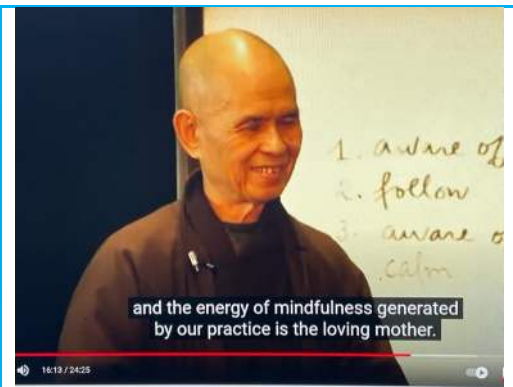


Figure 2.7G  
 Thich Nhat Hanh during 2012 Mindful Breathing workshop



Regular meditative practice allows our seeds of Mindfulness in Store Consciousness (Figure 2.7C p 13) to grow, and this means they can be more easily activated by us and so will arise into our Mind Consciousness where they can do wholesome work.

The seed of mindfulness is in all of us, yet it may be minute.

If you are not a practitioner, the seed of mindfulness is there, but it is very tiny.  
 If you practise mindful breathing, mindful walking, every day, the seed continues to grow.  
 Whenever you need that energy, you just touch it, and you have a powerful source of energy, to help you deal with whatever is happening up there (i.e. in Mind Consciousness).

Hanh YouTube 20 mins 11 secs to 20 mins 35 seconds  
 (of 24 mins 25 secs)

This is in essence the archetypal mother of mammals and humans, mediated by our CARE and nurturing Circuits [Panksepp 1998], that inter-is with our Autonomic A State (Ventral Vagal) [Panksepp 1998; web article B 28].

- 🌀 “You have to be there for your painful feeling, or emotion” [Hanh 16 mins 13 secs].
- 🌀 This 7<sup>th</sup> Breathing Exercise helps us to be right there with our distress; with our pain [after Hanh].

As indicated, this leads to the 8<sup>th</sup> exercise, to calm the distress; again just like a mother calming her distressed child. The mother does not have to know what is wrong with her distressed child at this moment, but simply being there for her or him, and cuddling gently, can greatly help to settle the distress; this is mediated through [affective \(affiliative\) touch](#) afferents [Craig 2015 p 173-174]. “The same thing is true with the practitioner.....” [Hanh YouTube 22mins 21 secs] She / he may not know what the cause of the distress is, yet they can take good care of it through the practice of these first eight breathing exercises.....

Extract from Glossary on [affective \(affiliative\) touch](#)

We all have touch sensors in the skin; some of these are known as affective (affiliative) touch sensors. This is important for the well-being of all of us; and crucial for infants / small children, especially when they are distressed. Gently cuddling will stimulate their affective touch pathway, thus allowing for interoceptive awareness of the affiliative touch to occur.

Affective touch is an interoceptive modality, and subserves homeostasis not only at the level of the individual but also at the level of the social community; it supports the health and well-being of the individual and the species.

Craig 2015 p 173

\*\*\* \*\*

## 2.8 CALMING PAINFUL FEELINGS – Calming inner distress

The essence of the 8<sup>th</sup> exercise is:

Breathing in, I calm my painful feelings;  
 Breathing out, I calm my painful feelings.

Hanh 2014 p 85

Figure 2.8A Breathing and Calming  
 Painful Feelings – and inner distress

The fact that this practitioner “is recognising and holding  
 that energy of fear and anger can help her (him) suffer less  
 after one or two minutes.”

Hanh YouTube 22’ 42”

In this way, the mindful practitioner does not run away from the pain, but rather is with the pain – and in embracing it she calms and settles the distress [after Hanh 2012: 23 mins 48 secs]. In the light of these reflections, we can consider this alternative version; give it a go....and then adopt the wordings that we feel most at home with.

### Calming painful feelings – Calming inner distress – alternative version

Breathing in, I befriend my painful feelings;  
 Breathing out, I smile for my painful feelings.  
 Breathing in, I smile to my painful feelings 😊;  
 Breathing out, painful feelings calming.

Variation based on Hanh


Figure 2.8B Alternative Version  
 Breathing and Calming Painful Feelings –  
 and inner distress

\*\*\* \*\*

Summarising Breathing Exercises 2.7 and 2.8, and following Thich Nhat Hanh’s teaching, we can say: Mindfulness enables us:

	Comment
<p><b>i. To recognise, that is, simple recognition, of the pain.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Breathing in, I know anger is in me. (or despair, or jealousy, is in me) [21' 30"].</li> <li>➤ Simple Recognise; not fighting.</li> </ul>	<p>This is in the 7<sup>th</sup> Exercise;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Recognition and Awareness of distress</li> </ul> <p>See also: <a href="#">RAIN of Compassion</a> [Brach 2023 pp 213-239]</p>
<p><b>ii. To embrace the distress.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌀 In this way, we can help to settle the distress within (our hurt inner child if we conceive it in this way....just as a parent or grandparent would nurture and settle their child / grandchild.</li> </ul>	<p>This is in the 8<sup>th</sup> Exercise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌀 Calming the distressing feeling.</li> </ul>

Figure 2.9 (2.7 with 2.8): [Recognition of the Pain and Embracing the Distress](#)

	<p>We, as the mindful practitioner, will invite the seed of mindfulness from Store Consciousness, and this will generate a lot of energy<sup>10</sup> that can then take good care of our pain by embracing it, and thus allowing it to calm and settle.</p> <p>The distressed seed will have arisen in association with a B or C State; the Energy of Mindfulness inter-is with the Safe Space within of our A Ventral Vagal State.</p>
<p>Figure 2.10: Thich Nhat Hanh:                  Energy of Mindfulness can embrace and dissipate distressed states</p> <p>Hanh 2012 24 mins 25 seconds in</p>	

The regular practice of the first eight of the sixteen basic Breathing Exercises of the Sutra on The Full Awareness of Breathing can greatly help and facilitate Well-Being and flourishing.

This second set of four breathing exercises (5 to 8) is very subtle, with number 8 allowing us to calm painful feeling / vedana. This then paves the way to the next eight exercises in the Sutra, i.e. 9 – 16, to be discussed in F 21.

\*\*\* \*\*

<sup>10</sup> “This will generate a lot of energy.” This overlaps with the Tibetan Buddhist approach of Lama Yeshe when he is discussing the meaning of merit. He says:

Merit means generating a momentum of positive energy in the mind that provides the context for realising that all things are interconnected, so not separate or set apart.

Lama Yeshe 2020 pp 113-114

Meditative practices help us to generate such positive energy, and wisdom lies in the realisation of Inter-Being [Hanh / Lama Yeshe]. See also Glossary entry re [merit](#).

**Part III Some further reflections on The First Eight Breathing Exercises.**

These first eight breathing exercise, as discussed above, can pave the way for inner transformations. The basic steps of these eight are summarised in Figure 3.1 below

		Comments	Thich Nhat Hanh comments
1	Breathing in, I am aware of my in-breath; Breathing out, I am aware of my out-breath.	As we concentrate and focus fully on the in-breath and out-breath, there is no room, as it were, for the mind to attend to negative ruminations / the Second Arrow.	“This very simple exercise can help you to let go of your thinking, your worries, and your fear. It gives you a lot of freedom right away.” [Hanh 2014 p 85]
2	Breathing in, I follow my in-breath all the way through; Breathing out, I follow my out-breath all the way through.		Breathing like this, not only are you aware of your breath, you are fully concentrating on your breath.” [Hanh op cit]
3	Breathing in, I am aware of my whole body; Breathing out, I am aware of my whole body.		<u>Art of calming / settling the body</u>
4	Breathing in, I smile to my whole body, Breathing out, whole body smiling; Breathing in, I smile to my body; Breathing out, whole body calming.	Thich Nhat Hanh [2013] emphasises the importance of smiling, as does Tara Brach [Brach 2023 pp 86-87]	Calming the body is a prerequisite for calming the mind; body and mind inter-are. See also <u>Nāmarūpa</u>
5	Breathing in, (my) Being Generating Joy; Breathing out, Joy is Flowering.  Breathing in, I feel joy; Breathing out, Joy.	<u>Art of Happiness 23’ 00’</u> ; <u>generating Joy and Happiness</u> “We can make use of Mindfulness to bring in a feeling of joy any place, any time.” [Hanh 2014 85]	
6	Breathing in, I feel happy; Breathing out, I feel happy.	“Mindfulness helps us to recognise the many conditions of happiness we already have” Hanh 2014 p 85	
7	Breathing in, I am aware of a painful feeling; Breathing out, I am aware of a painful feeling.  <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 10px auto;">When a painful feeling or emotion manifests, we should be there to take care of it. With mindfulness, we recognise pain, embrace it, and bring relief. Hanh 2014 p 85</div>	Recognition that we have distress / pain within us is crucial. Cf. Rumi and the Guest House poem.	<u>Art of Suffering</u>  Taking care of painful feelings and emotions; and calming them down.
8	Breathing in, I befriend / smile to my painful feelings; Breathing out, painful feelings calming or Breathing out, I calm my painful feelings.	These exercises as a whole calm body and mind, and allow them to be peaceful. Body, mind, feelings, and breath are unified**. Hanh 2014 p 85	
** The breathing sequences from 1 above are all bringing about harmony of body, breath, and mind. ☸ For further clarification on this, please see Section IV, Figure 4.2 and 4.3			

**Figure 3.1: The First Eight Breathing Exercises paving the way for transformation**

\*\*\* \*\*



Breathing Exercises nine to sixteen take us even further into ways of dealing with our suffering, so that, to paraphrase Thich Nhat Hanh's words, we can really transform the mud of suffering into a glowing lotus flower. To do this, we need to embrace the suffering, our pain, the mud; otherwise our lotus will never flower, or only flower in a less than wholesome sense / state.

In order to embrace the mud, we need energy. That energy can come from the Joy and Happiness / Well-Being consciously galvanised in the exercises 2.7 and 2.8. While writing this article, I got a lovely Christmas Card from Ruth Sewell, an Autogenic Therapist colleague, "from an original by Alison Whateley", reproduced below with thanks. It is seeds of Love, Joy and Mindfulness that, when watered, allow happiness and Well-Being to bloom in our families, society, and the world.



Figure 3.2  
Happiness and Well-Being Blooming where  
Seeds of Love and Joy are planted

Credit: from an original by Alison Whateley  
[www.alisonwhateleydesign.co.uk](http://www.alisonwhateleydesign.co.uk)

With thanks and gratitude; and especially for the high resolution image Alison sent to me – which is of far higher quality than the photo I took of the Christmas Card 😊

**Part IV: Summary overview of the First Eight Breathing Exercises and their neurophysiological correlates**

	Essence of Breathing Exercise	<u>Befriending Variation</u>	Neuro-physiological aspects
1	Breathing in, I am aware of my in-breath; Breathing out, I am aware of my out-breath.	Breathing in, I am aware of my in-breath; Breathing out, I <u>smile</u> to my out-breath.	Gentle breathing facilitating mind-body harmony. Smiling facilitating feeling at ease.
2	Breathing in, I follow my in-breath all the way through; Breathing out, I follow my out-breath all the way through.	Breathing in, I follow my in-breath all the way through; Breathing out, I <u>smilingly</u> follow my out-breath all the way through.	If the outbreath is somewhat longer than the in-breath, this increases <u>Heart Rate Variability</u> , an indirect measure of increased Ventral Vagal A State which is associated with increased nurturing of self and others.
3	Breathing in, I am aware of my whole body; Breathing out, I am aware of my whole body.	Breathing in, I am aware of my whole body; Breathing out, I <u>smile</u> to my whole body.  Simply Being Aware of our body is part of <u>Heart-Mindfulness</u> . This is the reverse of ignoring our body.	Our body state is like an internal indicator giving us vital information of what is going on. Noticing that we are moving into (or are in) a B or C State is a form of <u>meta-awareness</u> . As Deb Dana says: "Story Follows State." If we are driven by our state, we are essentially on "Automatic Pilot", and are like the man on a horse <sup>11</sup> mentioned by Hanh [Hanh 1987 p 65].
4	<u>Breathing in, I smile to my whole body,</u> <u>Breathing out, whole body smiling;</u> <u>Breathing in, I smile to my body;</u> <u>Breathing out, whole body calming.</u>	Smiling is introduced here in the left hand column (essence section); this actually follows Thich Nhat Hanh's commentaries on the 2013 YouTube; smiling can be seen as a preamble to befriending the body.	A gentle genuine smile brings about a feeling of ease and befriending. This implies we are in, or are moving into, the Ventral Vagal A State. (See B 28 on website)
5	Breathing in, I feel joy; Breathing out, I feel joy.	<u>Breathing in, (my) Being Generating Joy;</u> <u>Breathing out, Joy is Flowering.</u>	Exercises 5 to 8 are related to dealing with our suffering. Exercises 5 and 6 can enable us to be firmly rooted in the A State (Ventral Vagal); the befriending state; which then enables us to befriend our distress <sup>12</sup> (of 7 & 8).
6	Breathing in, I feel happy; Breathing out, I feel happy.	<u>Breathing in, I feel happy;</u> <u>Breathing out, I smile to the many conditions of happiness already present</u> [after Hanh 2014 p 85].	Being in the A State, we can realise, generally, that these conditions are already present; if we have eyes to see; air to breathe; water to drink [after Hanh].
7/			

**Figure 4.1 Part I: The First Eight Breathing Exercises; Befriending aspects; and Neurophysiology**

<sup>11</sup> A man is riding a horse that is running very fast; someone by the roadside asks him where he is going. The man shouts back: "How would I know; ask the horse!" [Hanh 1987 p 65].

<sup>12</sup> We are as it were already "Changing the Peg" in preparation for dealing with our distress / hurt inner child.

Figure 4.1 The First Eight Breathing Exercises; Befriending aspects; and Neurophysiology <i>continued</i>			
	Essence of Breathing Exercise	Befriending Variation	Neuro-physiological aspects
7	Breathing in, I am aware of a painful feeling; Breathing out, I am aware of a painful feeling.	<b>Breathing in, I am aware of painful feelings;</b> <b>Breathing out, I name the painful feeling (e.g. “resentment”)</b>  Being mindfully aware of the feeling, (and especially if it can be named) is a form of naming and taming [Siegel 2010B p 116; 246 & 186 <sup>ref 116</sup> ]; or more technically Affect Labelling [Lieberman et al 2007]. These have been shown to reduce distress.	Before we can befriend painful feelings, we need to acknowledge them.  ➤ <b>Blocking feelings damages our health and Well Being [de Rivera 2018 p 114-128].</b>
8	Breathing in, I calm my painful feeling. Breathing out, I calm my painful feeling.	<b>Breathing in, I befriend / smile to my painful feelings;</b> <b>Breathing out, painful feelings calming or</b>  <b>Breathing out, I calm my painful feelings.</b>  We cannot calm our painful feelings by striving to do so. We can, through mindful meditation, bring about changes within the body-mind-breathing continuum that allow the feelings to calm. <b>“Calming Feelings Follows Body State”,</b> with thanks to Deb Dana (“Story Follows State”) [Dana 2018 p 35].	As mentioned above, a gentle genuine smile brings about a feeling of ease and befriending. This implies we are in, or are moving into, the Ventral Vagal A State. (See B 28 on website). So we can see this in terms of taking good care of our inner distress; at times this may be at a deeper level – taking good care of our hurt inner child, just as a parent / carer would take care of a distressed child.  ○ See Section 2.7; including Figures 2.7B; 2.7D; 2.7E and 2.7F.

**Figure 4.1 Part II: Summary of First Eight Breathing Exercises; Befriending Distress; and their neuro-physiological underpinnings**

Fundamental to the whole Sutra of the Full Awareness of Breathing is, of course, the breathing. Mindful breathing can in itself settle our being. Breath, Body and Mind Inter-are.

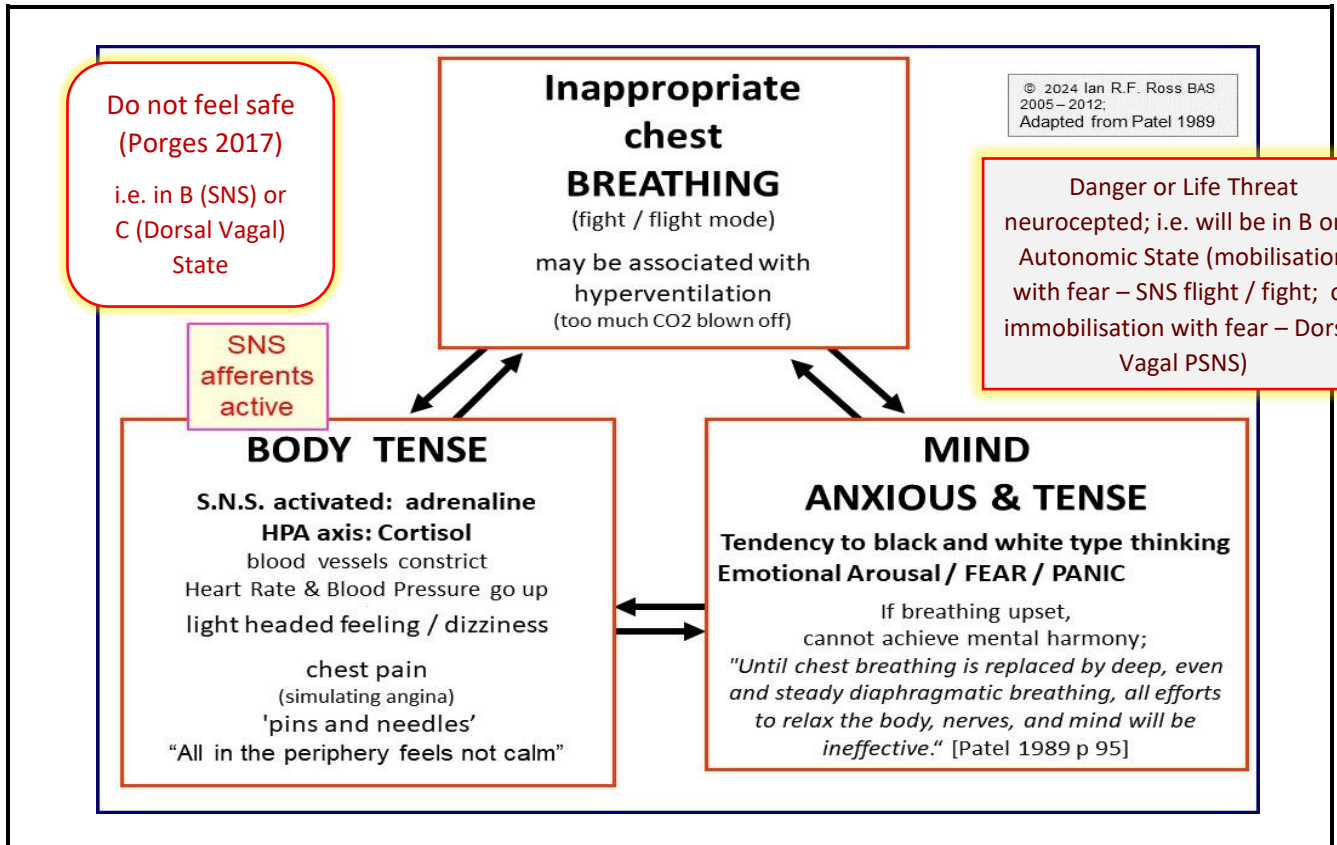
When we are tense or distressed, our breathing often becomes distressed and dysregulated.

❖ This is illustrated in Figure 4.2.

Regular practice of the Full Awareness of Breathing can bring about inner harmony – inner harmony in both body and mind:

❖ Illustrated in Figure 4.3.





**Figure 4.2**

**The effect of inappropriate breathing on Mind and Body; and / or the effect of tension in body on Mind and Breathing; and / or the effect of mental distress on Breathing and Body.**

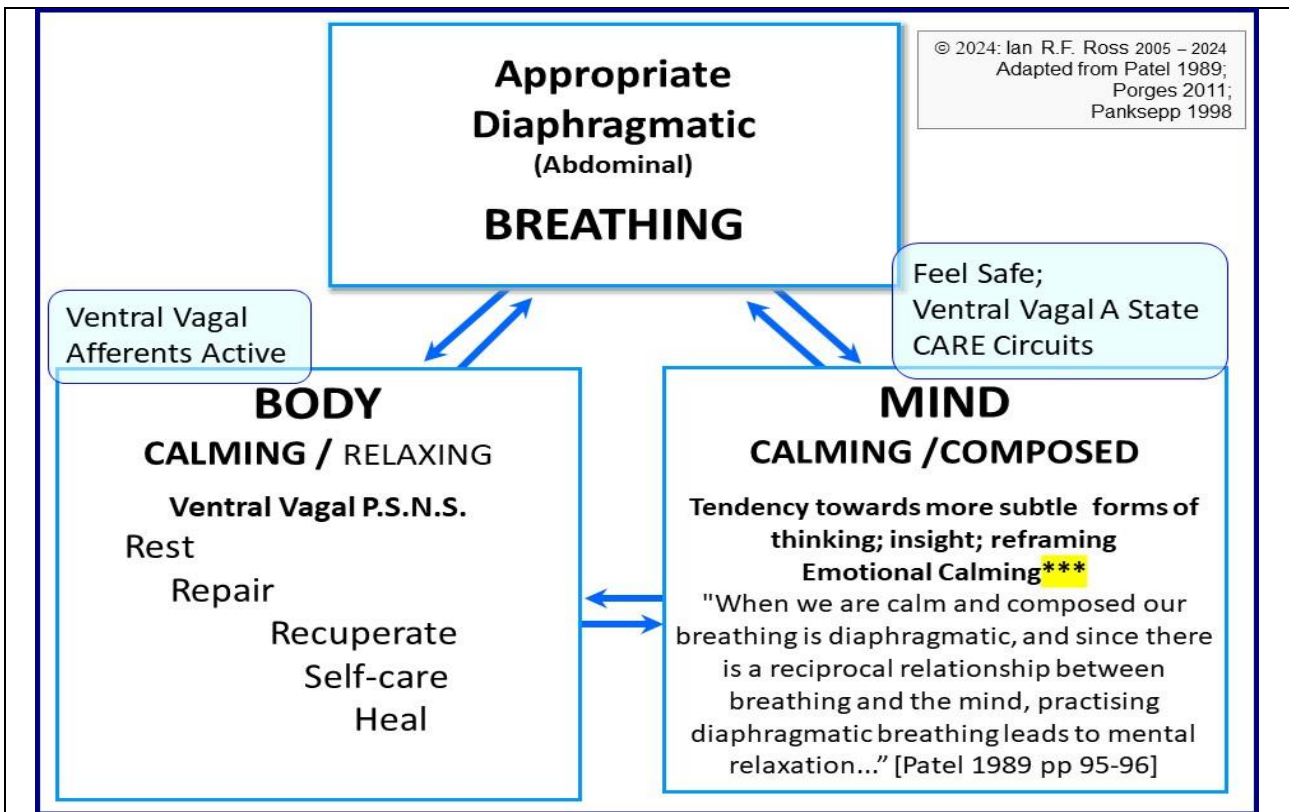
(Imported from original Autogenic Handout)

"Danger or Life Threat" box has been added for the F 20 rendition of the figure.

**Comments on Figure 4.2**

- i. This figure is based on a handout that I have given out for over twenty years to students of Autogenic Training.
- ii. The original ideas came to me from Chandra Patel, who gave a talk in London during the 1980s, and wrote a wonderful book back in 1989 which transformed my approach to stress management and human distress [Patel 1989]. This is a modified version of the of the original slide, embracing more recent work by Porges.
- iii. The phrase: "all in the periphery feels not calm" is a deliberate misquote of Wallnöfer 2000 (see also Figure 4.3).
- iv. Everything "in the periphery feels not calm" because the autonomic SNS afferents are bombarding the brain with messages from the body that are alerting the mind-brain to danger. Danger has been neurocepted, so we do not feel safe. This reflects a hypervigilant state. For the actual quote, see Figure 4.3 comments.
- v. Note that the breath, body and mind all have two way communications; so if one becomes dysregulated, the other two will be dysregulated.

Figure 4.3 /



**Figure 4.3**  
**The effect of Diaphragmatic Breathing on Body and Mind**

**Note:**

- "Diaphragmatic breathing in conjunction with physical and mental relaxation has been found to reduce high blood pressure and anxiety significantly." [Patel 1989 p 95].
- \*\*\* Meditative practices are associated with changes in Pre-Frontal Cortex dynamics which inhibit amygdala activity and hence inhibit FEAR and RAGE circuits [Cahn et al 2006; Davidson 2003A; Delgado et al 2008; Gross 2002].

**Comments on Figure 4.3**

- i. Body, Breath and Mind inter-are. As one of these begins to settle, the other two begin to settle; all three have two way communications with the other two.
- ii. As the breath settles, neuroception increasingly results in a feeling of safety; the mind-brain is now receiving Ventral Vagal Autonomic Afferents [Craig 2015] resulting in us feeling calm and safe.

❖ This is the neurophysiological basis for Wallnöfer’s statement, in relation to an Autogenic Training sequence, that:

Everything in the periphery is quiet  
 Wallnöfer 2000

❖ i.e. The AT sequence has activated these Autonomic (Ventral Vagal) afferents (as well as the efferents).

- iii. The Buddha’s practice of meditation / breathing work must have led him to realise the profound well-being effects that breathing exercises can have on us; and thanks to this we have:

🌀 The Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing

Part V: Appendices, Thematically Related Articles, Glossary and References

**5.1: APPENDIX I**

**Further Meditations on Linking Body and Mind.**

In this connection, Hanh suggests that from time to time we take care of our whole body by doing a complete body scan including more or less every part of our body.

The secret of practising this second subject of Full Awareness, “Awareness of the Body”, is to concentrate your mind and observe each organ of the body in full awareness.

Hanh 1990 / 2008 p 31

Here we cite three parts of the body as examples in the form of direct quotes from Thich Nhat Hanh:

- ✿ Aware of my hair, I breathe in.
- ✿ Smiling to my hair I breathe out.
- ✿ Breathing in, I am aware of my eyes.
- ✿ Breathing out, I smile to my eyes.
- ✿ Breathing in, I am aware of my liver.
- ✿ Breathing out, I smile to my liver.

Hanh 1990 e.g. pp 49-53

In this body meditation, we embrace each part of the body sequentially.

You breathe in and embrace each part of your body with mindfulness, like a mother holding her baby tenderly in her arms. And smile to her / him. This is very healing, very important.....

When awareness is born, we know what to do and what not to do. We don't need anyone to tell us to stop drinking alcohol. We just embrace our liver and stop drinking and ingesting poisons that harm it. Each part of our body should be embraced and taken care of in exactly the same way.

Hanh 1990 / 2008 p 52 - 53

In this sense we can see that our bodies are sacred – they are what gives us life while on mother earth. (See also the concept of us having an “internal temple of peace and devotion”, as outlined in Prayers of the Cosmos by Neil Douglas Klotz with reference to the Aramaic words of Yeshua<sup>13</sup> [Douglas-Klotz 1990]. See [Nethqadash shmakh](#) [Teytey malkuthakh](#) in glossary.

<sup>13</sup> Referring to the part of the Lord's Prayer of Yeshua “....Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom Come” Douglas-Klotz says, in connection with the totality of this phrase: “Once we have created an interior temple of peace and devotion this heart place can be used to clarify our goals and to break through to a new sense of Creativity in our lives”

## 5.2 APPENDIX II

### Staying calm in troubled seas

I came across this reading from 1987, or the reading came across me, in early November 2023, and this formed the morning reading before our morning meditation.

Many of us worry about the situation of the world. We don't know when the bombs will explode. We feel we are on the edge of time. As individuals, we feel helpless, despairing. The situation is so dangerous, injustice so widespread, the danger so close. In this kind of situation, if we panic, things will only become worse. We need to remain calm, to see clearly. Meditation is to be aware, and to try to help.

I like to use the example of a small boat crossing the Gulf of Siam<sup>14</sup>. In Vietnam, there are many people, called boat people, who leave the country in small boats. Often the boats are caught in rough seas or storms, the people may panic, and boats can sink. But even if one person aboard can remain calm, lucid, knowing what to do and what not to do, he or she can help the boat survive. His or her expression – face, voice – communicates clarity and calmness, and people have trust in that person. They will listen to what he or she says. One such person can save the lives of many.

Our world is something like a small boat. Compared with the cosmos, our planet is a very small boat. We are about to panic because our situation is not better than the situation of the small boat in the sea. You know that we have more than 50,000<sup>15</sup> nuclear weapons. Humankind has become a very dangerous species. We need people like that in order to save us. Mahayana Buddhism says that you are that person, that each of you is that person.



Figure Appendix II: The Gulf of Thailand  
 Image from: <https://www.worldatlas.com/gulfs/gulf-of-thailand.html> with thanks

Hanh 1987 pp 11-12

Meditation is to be aware,  
 and to try to help.

Hanh 1987 p 11

<sup>14</sup> The Gulf of Thailand, also known as the Gulf of Siam

<sup>15</sup> Present 2023 situation according to SIPRI: Of the total global inventory of an estimated 12, 512 warheads in January 2023, about 9576 were in military stockpiles for potential use—86 more than in January 2022 (SIPRI). Michael, my brother, comments, on proof reading this article: “The number of nuclear weapons has declined by more than 80% since the Cold War, from a peak of 70,300 in 1986 to 12,700 in 2022. Sunday Times 31/12/2023. Usually we touch only what is wrong. If we can expand our vision and also see what is right, this wider picture always brings joy.!!” I agree – and the present sutra facilitates joy and well-being.

### 5.3 APPENDIX III

#### Some brief reflections on

#### The Sutra on The Four Foundations of Mindfulness

The Sutra on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness was a fundamental teaching of the Buddha, and has been discussed and commented on for over two millennia. There are various versions of it, and its scope is vast – and can be confusing. What follows is an attempt to go with the flow of its overall structure.

The primary source for what follows is Thich Nhat Hanh. He has studied the sutras extensively. Some approaches to the sutras are quite academic, and this can lead to them being divorced from the practicalities of the daily ups and downs of life. Hanh's perspective is very refreshing – and embraces a series of exercises / meditations that can enhance our well-being and joie de vivre – and thus of those we inter-are with.

#### Sutra on The Four Foundations of Mindfulness

#### I. MINDFULNESS OF THE BODY IN THE BODY

1.1: Equates to Breathing Sequence exercises 1 to 4 (of the Sutra on The Full Awareness of Breathing)

1.2: Recognising all parts of the body

1.3: Investigation of the four “elements” that make up the body: earth, water, fire and air [Hanh 1998].

In Hanh 2006 and 1993 he includes the following in observing the body in the body:

- Being fully Aware of the Breath;
- Awareness of Bodily Positions;
- Awareness of Bodily Actions (e.g. eating; chewing; walking; urinating; defaecating).
- The various parts of the body;
- The four elements;
- Awareness of impermanence of the body; and the disintegration and decomposition of the body (corpse) following death [Hanh 1993 p 56, which lists nine such exercises].
- Healing with Joy [Hanh 2006 p 61].

#### II. MINDFULNESS OF THE FEELINGS IN THE FEELINGS

2.1 Healing Wounds with the Awareness of Joy:

i.e. This equates to the Breathing Sequence 5 to 8

- ❖ Vedana (feeling tones) is one of these. The exercise here is observing pleasant, unpleasant, and neither pleasant nor unpleasant feelings.
  - Essentially that of the Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing.
  - Yet includes seeing / becoming aware of the roots of the feelings <sup>[Hanh 1993 p 70]</sup> and identifying neutral feelings [Hanh 2006 p 67].

In the establishment known as the feelings, the practitioner is fully aware of pleasant, painful (unpleasant), and neutral feelings as they arise, endure, and disappear. He is aware of:

- ✚ feelings that have a psychological basis and
- ✚ feelings that have a physiological basis.

Hanh 2006 p 36

Note that Feelings in Buddhist psychology are regarded as one of the 51 mental formations. The area of feelings is so vast that it is given its own category within the Four Establishments of Mindfulness. Mental formations are discussed further in Section III below.



### III. MINDFULLY OBSERVING THE MIND IN THE MIND (CITTA<sup>16</sup>)

#### Equates to Breathing sequence 9-12

- ✚ “To be aware of the mind is to be aware of mental formations” [Hanh 1998 p 73]
- ✚ Mental formation can be wholesome or unwholesome.

Feelings are also mental formations, but they were dealt with on their own in the Second Establishment of Mindfulness, because the feeling sphere is so wide. What remains are all the other psychological phenomena, such as perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness.

Hanh 2006 p 75

- ✚ Observing the Mind in the Mind also embraces penetrating the roots of our mental formations – see below.

Note: the word formation is also used in Buddhist metaphysics for Physical Formations. A flower is a physical formation; as is a cloud. A thought, a feeling; an emotion are all examples of Mental Formations. These are all made up of non-self elements. See [Form](#) in glossary.

This exercise includes:

- ✚ Observing the Craving / Desiring Mind;
- ✚ Observing Anger; hatred;
- ✚ Observing Sadness;
- ✚ Looking deeply to see the roots of our emotions / mental formations.
- ✚ Love Meditation [Hanh 2006 pp 87-93], and
- ✚ Also observing the state of mind of liberation [Hanh 2006 p 36].

We usually look at mind consciousness<sup>17</sup> and store consciousness as two different things, but store consciousness is just mind consciousness at a deeper level. If we look carefully at our mental formations, we can see their roots in our store consciousness. Every time one of the fifty one mental formations arises, we acknowledge its presence, look deeply into it, and see its nature of impermanence and interbeing. When we practice this, we are liberated from fear, sorrow, and the fires that burn inside us. When mindfulness embraces our joy, our sadness, and all our other mental formations, sooner or later we will see their deep roots. With every mindfulness step and every mindfulness breath, we see the roots of our mental formations. Mindfulness shines its light upon them and helps them to transform.

Hanh 1998 p 75

As in the Fifth Exercise (2.5) of the Sutra on the full awareness of breathing, embracing joy is crucial to this transformation. For us to look deeply into painful / distressing mental formations, we need to be in the Autonomic A (Ventral Vagal) state. In the course of meditation, we can be increasingly moving into the A state and this will facilitate insight into the roots of the matter.

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### IV. Mindfully Observing phenomena /

<sup>16</sup> [Citta](#): Sanskrit; Pali for mind. Pronounced Chitta.

<sup>17</sup> See Figure 2.7B and 2.7C on page 14.

IV. [Mindfully Observing phenomena \(dharma\) in the phenomena \[Hanh 1998 p 76\]](#)  
[Equates to Breathing Sequence 13-16](#)

“Phenomena” means “the objects of our mind”. Each one of our mental formations has to have an object. If you are angry, you have to be angry at someone or something, and that person or thing can be called the object of your mind. When you remember someone or something, that is an object of your mind....  
 When we are attentive to a bird singing, that is an object of the mind. When our eyes see the blue sky, that is an object of the mind....

Hanh 1998 p 76

Hanh clarifies observing phenomena, the objects of the mind, in this way:

In the establishment known as the objects of the mind, the practitioner is fully aware of

- ✚ The Five Aggregates (form, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness).
- ✚ The Sense Organs and their objects<sup>18</sup>.
- ✚ The factors that can obstruct understanding and liberation<sup>19</sup>.
- ✚ The factors that can lead to awakening, and
- ✚ The Four Noble Truths concerning suffering and the release from suffering.

Hanh 2006 p 36

Note that investigating phenomena is one of the

✚ Seven Factors of Awakening [Hanh 1998 pp 214-220]. The Seven are:

Joy	Energy / Effort / Diligence / perseverance	Concentration
Ease	Mindfulness	Investigating Phenomena
		Equanimity (Letting go)

To conclude, The fourth establishment of Mindfulness embraces the following exercises:

- i. Discriminative Investigation
- ii. Observing Internal formations
- iii. Transforming Internal Formations<sup>20</sup>
- iv. Overcoming Guilt and Fear [Hanh 2006 pp 109-111]
- v. Sowing Seeds of Peace [Hanh 2006 pp 112-117].

Sowing Seeds of Peace is a wonderful way to conclude section IV; and indeed the whole discourse.

The purpose of this exercise is to sow and water the seeds of peace, joy, and liberation in us. If internal formations are the seeds of suffering, then joy, peace, and liberation are the seeds of happiness.

Hanh 2006 p 112

<sup>18</sup> E.g. eyes that see a bird; ears that hear the bird singing.

<sup>19</sup> E.g. The Five Hindrances [[Satipatthana - Wikipedia](#)]

<sup>20</sup> Samyohana is Sanskrit for “internal formation”, and this “can also be translated as ‘knots,’ ‘fetters,’ ‘agglomeration,’ or ‘bringing together.’” [Hanh 2006 p 100]



My understanding is that these two sutras (i.e. The Full Awareness of Breathing and the Sutra on The Four Foundations of Mindfulness) overlap significantly. The Full Awareness of Breathing may for some be an easier initial way into the deep teachings contained in both these sutras.

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#### 5.4 Appendix IV /

## 5.4 APPENDIX IV

### FINDING OUR GROUND MEDITATION

[Based on, and adapted from: Williams & Penman 2023]

#### (A Grounding Meditation)

##### Preamble:

Adopt an appropriate position, such as sitting on a chair – with feet firmly on the ground; or lying down. If the room is coldish, it can be helpful to have a rug / blanket over us.

Gently become aware of how *the body as a whole is feeling*.

##### First Focus – Feet:

We now bring our attention to our feet – resting on the floor (if sitting); or to our heels if lying flat.

- Gently become aware of how they feel....
- Perhaps they are warm .....or cold....
- We accept whatever sensations come to..... are present – in the feet.
- If the mind wanders, as it tends to do, that is ok; once we realise it has wandered, the practice is to gently bring the focus of our attention back to the feet.
- Keep focusing..... becoming aware of any sensations in the feet that may be present....
- If we do not notice any sensations, that is o.k.; it simply means that we are aware that we are not experiencing any sensations. This itself is a form of awareness.....
- .....continue in this way a couple of minutes or so...
- .....and then gently let go of this focusing on the feet.

##### Second Focus – Seat / Buttocks area:

We now move our attention to what is supporting us....

- If sitting, we bring our attention to the seat area, noticing how it feels.
- If lying down, focus on the areas of the body that are in contact with the floor / mat.
- Notice how this area of the body in contact with its support feels;.....
- We keep the focus on this area.....; if the mind wanders, that is o.k.; simply bring the attention back to the seat area or back area. No judgment.
- Keeping
- awareness on this area for the next minute or two....
- ....and then let it go.....

##### Third Focus – Hands:

We now bring our awareness to our hands, that may be resting on our lap, our thighs, or the floor.....

- As before, keep the focus here....(i.e. this time on the hands)...
- Noticing how they feel....how they are supported.....
- Keep the focus on the hands....for a couple of minutes or so.....
- ..... then letting go.....

#### Fourth Focus - Breath:

We now bring out attention to the breath.....

- Becoming aware of the in-breath....
- Becoming aware of the out-breath....
- Air gently flowing in....
- ....gently flowing out...
- .....a gift from the cosmos....
- Keep the focus on the breath for a couple of minutes or longer.....
- ....and then gently letting go.....
- and closing the exercise .....in your own time, or with the sound of the bell.

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#### Post-amble

This exercise can take just a few minutes; or longer if we prefer. To start with, keep it fairly brief. This meditation can be used to anchor us if and when we feel unsettled. It may well be that we find that we prefer one of the above focuses, one of the above anchors. If this is the case, then we can adopt that one focus as our meditation, and leave the other three out. Alternatively, we can select two or three of the above that resonate with us – perhaps leaving out the fourth focus on breathing (see p 5 re caveat to the Full Awareness of Breathing Sutra).

Adopt what feels right of you....what is “Autogenic”<sup>21</sup> for you.

#### Reference

Williams, Mark; and Penman, Danny: 2023 Deeper Mindfulness: *The new way to rediscover calm in a chaotic world* ISBN 978-0-349-43320-2

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1<sup>st</sup> March 2024

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<sup>21</sup> Autogenic: “generated from within ourselves” in the context of becoming calm through skilful means. This will be through, for example, on-going and regular practice the ten Standard AT exercises in Autogenics 3.0; or the first eight exercises in the Full Awareness of Breathing; or the above Grounding Meditation. These are all associated with feeling Safe.....the A State; this is in contrast to the B State of distress and being stressed. (See B 28 on website regarding the Polyvagal Theory and a simplified notation involving A, B and C States.) This is also very apposite for Mindfulness approaches. (See also: Part IV above including the story of the man on a horse – on ‘automatic pilot’ / B State – that of the driven mode: pp 21-24; and [meta-awareness I and II.](#))

**Part VI: Thematically related articles on web**

A3	Towards a concept of happiness and well-being	2010
A7	Porges and The Polyvagal Theory – <i>Reflections on clinical and therapeutic significance</i>	2012
A8	The Polyvagal Theory and a more sympathetic awareness of the ANS (after Porges et al)	2012
A9	Emotions, Well-Being and Immune Function: <i>Awe and Shame as modulators of Being – for good or ill</i>	2015
A11	Expressive Autogenic Resilience Training Exercises Series A	2021
A13	Expressive <i>Autogenic Resilience Training</i> Exercises (EARTE): Series C including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ EARTE No C1: <i>Authentic Pride and Resilience Exercise</i></li> <li>❖ EARTE No C2: <i>Expressive Writing Reflecting on our Authentic Self and True Nature</i></li> <li>❖ EARTE No C3: <i>Shame and Building Resilience Exercise</i></li> <li>❖ EARTE No C5: <i>Gratitude</i></li> <li>❖ EARTE No C7: <i>Wonder and a sense of Awe</i></li> </ul>	2021
B 12	Affect Labelling, Autogenic Training, and reducing Emotional Distress	2011
B 15	Towards a Growth Mindset <i>based on the work of Dr Carol S. Dweck</i>	2014
B 17	Windows of Affective Tolerance: <i>Reflections on Childhood Distress, Procedural Learned Tendencies, and the Therapeutic Dyad in the context of Primary Process Emotions and the Polyvagal Theory</i> [based on Ogden 2006 / 2009]	2014
B18	The Space to Choose – <i>reflections on the gap between the stimulus and the response</i> (after Frankl)	2014
B19	Reflections on a Secure Base: <i>Bowlby, Ainsworth, Attachment and Well-Being</i>	2017
B20	Separation Distress and Well-Being – <i>Neuro-physiological reflections on</i> <small>developing a Secure Base</small>	2018
B22	A playfully sympathetic approach to the Polyvagal Theory – <i>An introduction to Flourishing Autogenically</i>	2022
B 24	Autogenic Switches and Well-Being. This deals with some of the underlying dynamics that can facilitate balance and harmony in those regularly practising Autogenic Training	2020
B 25	Themes of Neuroscience relevant to Well-Being – <i>Based on the work of Richard Davidson et al</i>	2022
B 26	Well-Being and Flourishing as a Skill we can Develop – <i>Based on the work of Richard Davidson</i>	2022
B 27	Three Key Types of Meditation and their varying and specific effects on Well-Being	2022
B 28	An Experiential Introduction to ABC States of the Polyvagal Theory – <i>An outline of a brief practical guide developed with students of AT</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> edition Oct 2023
B 29	Reflections on the Window of Affective Tolerance in the context of Trauma and Mindfulness	pending
C2	Mindsight – <i>our seventh sense and associated pre-frontal cortex functions</i> [based on Siegel 2010]	2011
C6 B	Integration and Well Being: <i>Dancing in the Flow of Integration</i>	2013
C7	Being in touch with our Feelings	2011
C 13	Shadow and Light of our Time	2023
D 8	Duhkha II: The Second Arrow and Sympathetic Afferents	2017
D 11	Sukha: Paths of Well-Being, PSNS Afferents, and Inner Warmth: <i>from Duhkha to Sukha</i>	2017
E-03	Look at the Cypress Tree – Autonomic Afferents and Well-Being (Background Research Paper for a talk given to the British Autogenic Society 21st May 2016)	2016
F 1	An introduction to Autogenics 3.0 Based on the work of Luis de Rivera	2018
F 9	Constructive Feeling Meditation: Inter-Being Part I (A general introduction)	2022
F 14	Meditation on Inner Aspects of Autogenics 3.0 Sequence	Pending
F 11	Constructive Feeling Meditation: Inter-Being Part II <i>Meditations in and around “Call me by my True Names”</i>	2023
F 20	Reflections on the Full Awareness of Breathing Sutra Part I – embracing the first eight of the twelve Breathing Exercises (1 to 8)	This article
F 21	Reflections on the Full Awareness of Breathing Sutra Part II - completing the sixteen (9-16)	Pending

PART VII GLOSSARY

<p><u>Affective (affiliative) touch</u></p> <p>The afferent nerve fibres that convey the affiliative touch to the brain, and so our conscious realisation of the tender touch, are technically C-tactile sensory fibres [Craig 2015].</p>	<p>We all have touch sensors in the skin; some of these are known as affective (affiliative) touch sensors. This is important for the well-being of all of us; and crucial for infants / small children, especially when they are distressed. For example, gently cuddling a distressed child will normally stimulate their affective touch pathway, thus allowing for interoceptive awareness (here meaning subjective awareness) of the affiliative touch to occur; this will generally have a soothing effect on the child.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Affective touch is an interoceptive modality, and is subserves homeostasis not only at the level of the individual but also at the level of the social community; it supports the health and well-being of the individual and the species.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Craig 2015 p 173</p> </div> <p>We can also activate these pathways when we ourselves are distressed, and at these times we can take good care of our “hurt inner child”. See main text Section 2.7; and especially</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✚ Figures 2.7 E and F: Taking Good Care of our Hurt Inner Child; our Hurt Inner Feelings.</p> <p>Craig goes on to say:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>To my mind, the C-tactile receptors are safety detectors that activate the “calm and connection” system, the energy nourishment system, in opposition to the danger signals that activate the arousal and stress system, the system that expends energy.....</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Craig 2015 p 174</p> </div> <p>In terms of the polyvagal theory, the C-tactile pathway engender the Autonomic A state (ventral vagal); in contrast to danger signals that activate the B state (SNS: mobilisation in the context of fear); or the C Dorsal Vagal state of flop / not feeling good enough [Porges 2011; web articles B 22 and B 28 – see previous page for the list of thematically related articles on the web.]</p>
<p><b>Changing the Peg</b></p> <p>Imported from web article B 28, which itself was an abbreviated and renewed from web article E-03 glossary:              Changing the Peg i.</p> <p>Dealing appropriately with distressing emotions, recognising and befriending them, is a way of composting our experiences. From the compost, new creations and growth can occur in the coming Spring.</p>	<p>A concept from Buddhist psychology. It is suggested that “negative” mind states, including both destructive and distressing emotions, can best be overcome by changing our inner mental / feeling state to one of a positive (wholesome) emotion /affect (Hanh 1998 p 207-209). This switch in our being state is called changing the peg.</p> <p>Interestingly, Spinoza developed a similar concept in which he stated that we can only overcome a negative affect not by reason alone, but by “reason-induced-emotion” [Spinoza 1677; Damasio 2003 p 11-12].</p> <p style="text-align: center;">❖ Studies /</p>

<p>Changing the peg <i>continued</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Studies in neuro-science support this concept; positive affects tend to act as anti-dotes to the informational substances associated with such distressing mind states as anxiety, grief, and anger [Panksepp 1998; Ross 2010 p 272].</li> </ul> <div style="border: 2px solid yellow; border-radius: 20px; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Going for a walk in Nature can be a way of Changing the Peg.            On such a walk,            “fallen from heaven”            may manifest with a sacred sense of <u>Inter-Being</u>.</li> <li>❖ Learning from the Polyvagal Theory and embracing the ABC model can be way of implicitly Changing the Peg.</li> </ul> </div>
<p>Citta<sup>22</sup></p> <p>Citta is central to the Third Establishment of Mindfulness (See Appendix III).</p>	<p>Sanskrit and Pali for Mind</p> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0;"> <p>In early Buddhism and the present-day Theravada, citta is regarded as virtually synonymous with vijñāna (consciousness) and manas (intellect), but in later schools of Buddhism it is distinguished from those two. It is defined as the cognitive ground underlying the dynamic system of psychological operations (caitta). According to many schools, the mind in its natural state is intrinsically luminous, free from attachments and conceptualisations.....        Keown 2013 p 62</p> </div> <p>Numinous experience may overlap with this “intrinsically luminous” state.</p> <p>The Buddhist understanding of the mind (citta) is central to the teachings of the Four Establishments of Mindfulness, especially the third. Reflecting back on Appendix III, note especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ “To be aware of the mind is to be aware of <u>mental formations</u>” [Hanh 1998 p 73].</li> <li>✚ Observing the Mind in the Mind also embraces looking into and penetrating the roots of our mental formations.</li> </ul> <p>Also note that the third set of breathing exercises in the Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing (numbers 9 to 12) deal specifically with the mental formations (of the mind). This is planned to be covered in the forthcoming F 21 article.</p>
<p>Consciousness in Buddhist metaphysics</p>	<p>In Buddhist metaphysics, consciousness is perceived in terms of two parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Store Consciousness, in which seeds of many different types are stored; these are unconscious, and can be likened to being in the basement of our “house”, here signifying our body. If they are watered / activated they manifest in:</li> <li>❖ Mind /</li> </ul>

<sup>22</sup> *Citta* (Pali and Sanskrit: चित्त; pronounced *chitta*; IAST: *citta*)  
 (source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chitta\\_\(Buddhism\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chitta_(Buddhism)))



Consciousness in Buddhist metaphysics <i>continued</i>	❖ Mind Consciousness, which can be equated to our living room – where we are consciously aware of our feelings. The feelings and emotions that manifest in Mind Consciousness may be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pleasant;</li> <li>○ Unpleasant;</li> <li>○ Neutral;</li> <li>○ Toxic;</li> <li>○ Nurturing;</li> <li>○ Unwholesome;</li> <li>○ Wholesome.</li> </ul> See also Figures 2.7B and 2.7C in connection with the 7 <sup>th</sup> Breathing Exercise (Awareness of pain - <i>Awareness of a Painful Feelings / Vedana</i> ).
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Dukha	Please see under entry with Sukha
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Form <i>In Sense of Physical Formation</i>	In Buddhist psychology, Form is regarded as a physical formation, and constitutes one of the Five Skandhas. In this context a formation is anything that is formed. 🌸 A flower is a formation; a cloud is a formation.
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Formations are empty of a separate self; meaning that they are full of non-self elements.

✚ A flower, a human being, a tree are full of the sun, clouds, the air, and Mother Earth. Without these they could not be. Hence they are all “empty of a separate self”.

It is important to distinguish physical forms / formations from Mental Formations. Both, however, require consciousness to manifest. In Buddhist psychology Consciousness is one of the Five Skandhas. The Five Skandhas can be represented thus:

Physical	Non physical		
Form	Mental Formations 51 in total		Consciousness
e.g. flower; cloud; blood cell. All forms are full on non-self elements; all are empty of a separate self.	Feelings	Perceptions	Mind Consciousness
		Remaining Mental formations (Now 49)	Store Consciousness Seeds

Glossary Figure 1A: The Five Skandhas

See also [Mental Formations](#).

Happiness	Please see under Joy and Happiness
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Heart Rate Variability	Increased Heart Rate Variability (HRV) is related to increased Ventra Vagal Para-Sympathetic Nervous System activity, and thus to the relaxation response, social engagement, and befriending [Porges 2011].  Our heart rate varies with the in-breath and outbreath. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ During the in-breath, there is increased Sympathetic Nervous System activity, and so the heart speeds up a bit.</li> <li>○ During the outbreath, there is increased Ventral Vagal (Para Sympathetic Nervous System) activity, and the heart slows down a bit.</li> </ul> The difference between the speed of the heart during the in-breath and outbreath is called Heart Rate Variability. In general terms, increased HRV is associated with wholesome social engagement and feeling safe [Porges 2011].
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Joy and  
Happiness

See also  
[Joy](#); and  
[Happiness](#)  
that  
follows  
this entry.

Preamble:

In the Sutra of the Full Awareness of Breathing, Joy and Happiness are specifically referred to in exercises 2.5 and 2.6.; and are translations of terms used by Sakyamuni.

In English, and in different English speaking parts of the world, these words can have different meanings / connotations. What follows below is an attempt to clarify some of these meanings.

The original Buddhist teachings on these made the following distinction between the two words. Joy is seen as being associated with anticipation – and so can be linked to a sense of excitement.

The original Buddhist Sanskrit term used was [sukha](#) (translated by Hanh as suffering – Hanh 1998 p78). A true rendition as to what Sakyamuni mean in the English language may not be possible .

### JOY

The example given in the sutra is of a man in the desert, about to die of thirst, who all of a sudden sees an oasis, a pool of water, in the midst of a grove of trees. He feels joy and excitement. His mind and body race towards the pool, and he bends down, puts his hands in the water and brings the water to his mouth. Until the very last moment before he drinks the water, joy is there. His hands are shaking from excitement.

### HAPPINESS

But when he finally drinks the water, he tastes real happiness, and his excitement has completely disappeared. The Buddha was not criticizing joy. We need joy very much, but we also need to go further than joy.

Hanh 2008 p 61

Layout change; headings added (IR)

This gives a good basis on which to reflect on these matters. Yet words can have different meanings for different people even in the same community. In childhood, I still remember singing a song with my siblings while bouncing up and down our beds:

✚ I'm H A P P Y;

✚ I'm H A P P Y

✚ I'm HH HH HH HH H A P P Y. (letters of word sung out, not word.)

So here there was clearly for us some excitement associated with this happy state. It can happen that parents feel uncomfortable with their children's exuberant happy states, and this can, over time, suppress the glee of such moments in the children – as they sense, albeit an unconscious level, a subtle dampening feeling from their parents.

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If we type into a search engine the Sanskrit word for Joy, Mudita appears – which is one of the four forms of Love – sometimes termed The Four Immeasurable Minds [Hanh 1998 p 169 – 175].

In contrast to the above quote on Joy [Hanh 2008 p 61], the following gives us a somewhat different and to my mind further helpful perspective on Joy, which is also from Hanh.

Many small things can bring us tremendous joy, such as awareness that we have eyes in good condition. We just have to open our eyes and we can see the blue sky, the violet flowers 🌸, the children, the trees, and so many other kinds of forms and colours. Dwelling in mindfulness, we can touch these wondrous and refreshing things, and our mind of joy arises naturally. Joy contains happiness and happiness contains joy.

Hanh 1998 TonL p 7

Joy and Happiness *continued*

The last sentence here is very pertinent. Joy and Happiness Inter-Are.

Also note that Joy is one of the “Seven Factors of Awakening”.

..... It is possible to develop joy in your mind, even when your body is not well. This will, in turn, help your body. Joy comes from touching things that are refreshing and beautiful, within and outside ourselves. Usually we touch only what is wrong. If we can expand our vision and also see what is right, this wider picture always brings joy.

Hanh 1998 p 218

Below are further reflections on Joy, and then Happiness.

Joy I	<p>I would regard joy as often, yet not always, being intimately linked with others – such as a joyful moment. In this sense it inter-is with our A state of social engagement with others and the world – in fact the cosmos. True joy and Inter-Being inter-are.</p> <p>In the fifth (2.5) of the Breathing Exercises of the Full Awareness of Breathing, we bring to mind, engender, a feeling of joy. In the 6<sup>th</sup> breathing exercise (2.6), we bring forth – bring to mind, happiness.</p> <p>Both of these exercises move us towards the A State (Ventral Vagal) – that becomes a good foundation for then recognising and acknowledging distressed feelings within us; in the A State, we can call on the seed of mindfulness to come up to Mind Consciousness to take good care of the painful / distressed feeling within us; just as the “good enough<sup>23</sup>” mother takes good care of her distressed child.</p>
Joy II (Mudita)	<p>I have found this entry from Wikipedia very helpful – this coming from a different source regarding Joy. (<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mudita">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mudita</a> )</p>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mudita>

Muditā (Pāli and Sanskrit: मुदिता) is a dharmic concept of joy, particularly and especially sympathetic or vicarious joy:

- ☸ the pleasure that comes from delighting in other people's well-being.

The traditional paradigmatic example of this mind-state is the attitude of a parent observing a growing child's accomplishments and successes. Mudita should not be confused with pride, as a person feeling mudita may not have any benefit or direct income from the accomplishments of the other.<sup>[non sequitur]</sup>

Mudita is a pure joy unadulterated by self-interest.[citation needed]

Application

Mudita meditation cultivates appreciative joy at the success and good fortune of others. The Buddha described this variety of meditation in this way:

“Here, O, Monks, a disciple lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of unselfish joy, and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, everywhere and equally, he continues to pervade with a heart of unselfish joy, abundant, grown great, measureless, without hostility or ill-will.”

Buddhist teachers /

<sup>23</sup> Good enough mother: referring to the work of Winnicott 1965

Joy II continued (mudita)	
<p>☸ Buddhist teachers compare mudita to an inner spring of infinite joy that is available to everyone at all times, regardless of circumstances.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The more deeply one drinks of this spring,                  the more securely one becomes in one's own abundant happiness,                  the more bountiful it becomes to relish the joy of other people.</p> <p>Joy is also traditionally regarded as the most difficult to cultivate of the four Immeasurables (brahmavihāra: also "four sublime attitudes"). To show joy is to celebrate happiness and achievement in others even when we are facing tragedy ourselves.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">source: <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mudita">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mudita</a> with thanks.                  For references of this, please go to above Wikipedia site                  Bullet points added by IR</p>	
This feels as if it is getting to the heart of real joy, and will be modulated through our Ventral Vagal (A) State [Porges 2011].	
Joy III Declaration of interest	In a body-mind; mind-body sense the word joy is not neutral for me; it was the first name of my mother, her full originally being Joy Frances Wigram. She it was who brought to me my first inklings of the wonders of nature, and of what we now with joy call our Mother Earth.
Happiness I Based on the wisdom of Thich Nhat Hanh.	<p>Happiness can be seen from several perspectives.                  Happiness can also be seen in terms of a state of mind.                  We can be feeling somewhat down, and yet not aware of the wonders we have here right now, if we give ourselves time to be, to see, to feel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☸ The blue sky,</li> <li>☸ The sun; and</li> <li>☸ The fact that we can see, and hear <small>(for those of us that can)</small>.</li> </ul> <p>Seeing is a miracle. If we were suddenly to lose our sight, then we would realise just how much we have taken sight for granted during our lives.                  So happiness is partly to do with being aware and alive to the miracles of life, right now. We may complain about much in our society; yet for those of us blessed with living in a country where we can criticise our government (and often for good reasons) without persecution or worse, we may not realise that this itself is a gift that many citizens of the world do not have.</p> <p>Being Mindful on a daily basis can result in great gratitude – for example: the sound of birds singing, or the rustling of leaves in trees, can bring us great joy and happiness.</p>
Happiness II	Happiness at the expense of other people's happiness is not, I feel, true happiness. So the famous words for the rights of an individual of ".....and the pursuit of happiness" <sup>24</sup> seem to me to be hollow if "my happiness is at the expense of your happiness; my monetary wealth at the expense of yours".
Happiness III /	

<sup>24</sup> "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" is a well-known phrase from the United States Declaration of Independence. (ex: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life,\\_Liberty\\_and\\_the\\_pursuit\\_of\\_Happiness](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life,_Liberty_and_the_pursuit_of_Happiness) )

<p>Happiness III</p> <p>See also:  <a href="#">Sarbat da bhala</a></p> <p>Happiness is frequent English translation of the Sanskrit term <a href="#">Sukha</a>; this can be equated with Well-Being and a state of Flourishing</p>	<p>In the wonderful dialogue between the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu [Joy – <i>Finding Happiness in Troubled Times</i>], they explore the meaning of happiness.</p> <p>In this they both agree that true happiness is not essentially to do with gratification; rather, it is to do with playing our role in life in terms of family, community, and helping others. This resonates with our CARE and nurturing neuro circuits [Panksepp 1998], and with our innate goodness [Davidson 2018].</p> <p>We obviously need to take care of ourselves; yet the fundamental reason for this is to enable us to have wholesome social engagement with others [Porges 2011; the Ventral Vagal PSNS state which notated as the A state in B 28].</p> <p>This is what the Dalai Lama calls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <a href="#">Wise Selfishness</a> [op cit c 1. 10.24].              i.e.: Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu in conversation with Doug Abrams</li> </ul> <p>This is quite different from what he calls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <a href="#">Foolish Selfishness</a>, in which we have no regard for the other. Foolish Selfishness is essentially a state of ignorance in which we are encaptured, ensnared, in concepts such as “me” and “my”; “my rights” ....at the expense of “your rights”. (These themselves may be fuelled by us being in the B State – SNS mobilisation in context of fear; or C State – Dorsal Vagal and “not feeling good enough.)</li> </ul> <p>Again see B 28 on Web.</p>
<p>Happiness IV</p> <p>Cf Well-Being</p>	<p>Angela Clow, Professor of psychophysiology at Westminster University, suggests that the concept of Well-Being may be a better word than happiness for British (as compared with North American) citizens [Clow 2006].</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Source: Professor Angela Clow in a talk on "Stress, Health and Happiness" at the Edinburgh International Science Festival on 09.04.2006).</p> <p>This overlaps with Seligman’s research on Well-Being:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Wholesome / positive emotions;</li> <li>ii. Engaged, goal directed pursuits / occupations (i.e. we are involved in, and committed to, various pursuits / activities).</li> <li>iii. Meaning; and / or having a connection to some larger purpose<sup>SM</sup>. (This might be, for example, the ecology of our planet in the context of climate change.)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Paraphrased from Davidson 2005 referring to the work of <a href="#">Seligman</a> see also Seligman 1998; 2011</p> </div> <p><sup>SM</sup>: SEEKING /</p>

### Happiness IV *continued*

**SM:** SEEKING meaning in our lives seems to be an innate aspect of being human and being alive (Panksepp 1998); meaning for many of us can overlap with our spiritual dimension – using the term spiritual here in a non-religious, non deus-ex-Machina sense. I have found the following most helpful:

“By spiritual we mean the needs and expectation which all humans have to find meaning, purpose and value in life: even people who are not religious have belief systems that give their lives meaning and purpose. Spiritual distress can hinder physical healing, and its identification may improve healing outcomes. Thus we consider this a dimension relevant in holistic health care.”

Quoted from: The Department of General Practice (Edinburgh University);  
 notes for 5th Year Medical Students – 2002.

### Heart-Mindfulness [*Smriti* (Sanskrit: स्मृति, IAST: *Smṛti*)]

Although we may be very familiar with the term Mindfulness, it lacks the real essence of the original meaning of the Sanskrit term.

The concept of mindfulness has its origins in Buddhist philosophy:

- ❖ the Sanskrit word for mindfulness is *smriti*
- ❖ the Pali word is *sati*.

This literally means “remember” or “remembering”. Thich Nhat Hanh says:

Mindfulness is remembering to come back to the present moment. The character the Chinese use for ‘mindfulness’<sup>25</sup> has two parts:

- the upper part means ‘now,’ and
  - the lower part means ‘mind’ or ‘heart’.
- ✿ The first miracle of Mindfulness is to be present and able to touch deeply the blue sky, the flower, and the smile of our children.

Hanh 1998 p 64-65<sup>26</sup>

(Bullet point added)

Our western translation of *Smriti* / *Sati* gives it a misleading cognitive and left hemisphere bias: mindfulness that is not heartfelt is not mindfulness. The term would perhaps be better rendered as “Mind-Heartfulness”; “Heart-Mindfulness” – or left un-translated.

- ✚ Such a concept of Mindfulness overlaps with Jen, Human-heartedness<sup>28</sup>.

Jen /

<sup>25</sup> 念

<sup>26</sup> Hanh then goes on to describe the other aspects of Mindfulness in his chapter on “Right Mindfulness” (pp 64-83)

<sup>28</sup> In this context, Human-Heartedness or Jen-fulness may more capture the essence of *sati* / *smriti*.



<p>Jen</p> <p>Imported from glossary of B 27: "Three Key Types of Meditation and their varying and specific effects on Well-Being"</p>	<p>In ancient China, there was a quality that was considered higher than any other; it was not, for example, courage, or beauty, or perseverance. It was Jen.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: fit-content;"> <p style="text-align: center; color: blue;">This quality was known as Jen,              which can perhaps best be translated as              human-heartedness              Watts 1995; page 25</p> </div> <p>We can get more in touch with the sacred and human-heartedness within each of us by <a href="#">Reflective and Awareness Building</a> practices* which facilitate our CARE / nurturing circuits [Panksepp 1998], and activates our positive emotions through the increased activity of our Ventral Vagal para-sympathetic nervous system afferents [Porges 2011].              mental training              * to use Ruth Sewell's phrase rather than the too cognitive "mental training".</p>
<p>Mindfulness</p>	<p>Please see <a href="#">Heart-Mindfulness</a></p>
<p>Mental Formation              or              Mental Factors</p> <p>Not to be confused with <a href="#">Form</a> (i.e. Physical Formations)</p>	<p>It is our consciousness that allows us to be aware of mental formations.</p> <p>🌀 "To be aware of the mind is to be aware of mental formations" [Hanh 1998 p 73]</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid purple; padding: 10px;"> <p>Mental factors (Sanskrit: चैतसिक, romanized: caitasika or chitta samskara चित्त संस्कार;<sup>[1]</sup> Pali: cetasika; Tibetan: རོམས་བྱུང་ sems byung), in Buddhism, are identified within the teachings of the Abhidhamma (Buddhist psychology). They are defined as aspects of the mind that apprehend the quality of an object, and that have the ability to colour the mind. Within the Abhidhamma, the mental factors are categorized as formations (Sanskrit: samskara) concurrent with mind (Sanskrit: citta).<sup>[2][3][4]</sup> Alternative translations for mental factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ "mental states",</li> <li>○ "mental events", and</li> <li>○ "concomitants of consciousness"</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Source: <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mental_factors_(Buddhism)">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mental_factors_(Buddhism)</a></p> </div> <p>Hanh's tradition cites 51 mental formations; the number varies depending on the source. Here again, Wikipedia give a helpful background that is not, as far as I am aware, aligned to any one Buddhist school.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Within Buddhism, there are many different systems of Abhidharma (commonly referred to as Buddhist psychology), and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ each system contains its own list of the most significant mental factors<sup>[b][c]</sup>.</li> <li>❖ These lists vary from system to system both in the number of mental factors listed, and in the definitions that are given for each mental factor.</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: fit-content;"> <p style="text-align: center; color: blue;">These lists are not considered to be exhaustive; rather they present significant categories and mental factors that are useful to study in order to understand how the mind functions.[d]</p> </div> <p style="text-align: right;">Source: <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mental_factors_(Buddhism)">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mental_factors_(Buddhism)</a>              Bullet points and layout changed - IR</p> </div>	

Mental Formations constitute one of the Five Skandhas. This can be confusing, as Feeling and Perceptions are also Mental Formations, but the Buddha felt they were so important that they were each labelled as one of the Five Skandhas. For ease of reading the Glossary Figure 1A is reproduced here as Glossary Figure 1B , as illustrated below.

physical	Non physical			
Form	Mental Formations 51 in total			Consciousness
e.g. flower; cloud; blood cell. All forms are full on non-self elements; all are empty of a separate self.				
	Feelings	Perceptions	Mental formations Now 49	Mind Consciousness Store Consciousness Seeds

Glossary Figure 1B: The Five Skandhas (as 1A)

In this classification, there are a total of Fifty one categories of mental formations. Emotions (e.g. Anger / compassion / empathy) are within the forty nine listed above.

✚ Mental formations can be wholesome or unwholesome.

Feelings and perceptions are also mental formations; however, as already indicated, they are both so important that “they have their own categories” [Hanh 1998 p 180].

We will now briefly look at Feelings, Perceptions, and Emotions.

❖ Feelings can be pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral [Hanh 1998 p 71].

**FEELINGS**

Feelings are central to the Second group of Four Exercises (2.5 to 2.8) in the Sutra of the Full Awareness of Breathing.

- ❖ Feelings are described by Williams and Penman in terms of Feeling Tones, which is the fundamental basis to their 2023 book: *Deeper Mindfulness – The new way to rediscover calm in a chaotic world*.
- ❖ Feeling tone is their translation of [Vedana](#). [Williams and Penman 2023 pp 1-10].

Feelings can be: 

pleasant	unpleasant	neutral
----------	------------	---------

As feelings tones, we sense them as a feeling – before they manifest as an actual emotion.

It is as though we are neurocepting what is going on within (see [Neuroception](#)). I suggest that this overlaps with the Autonomic Nervous System as follows:

- 1) Wholesome pleasant feelings equating with the Autonomic State A (Ventral Vagal division of the Para-sympathetic Nervous System) of Social Engagement and feeling Safe [Porges 2011; and Ross 2023 in B 28 on web].
- 2) Unpleasant B Group: that of Danger that is neurocepted and activates the Autonomic State B of mobilisation in the context of fear – The Sympathetic Nervous System. This can manifest either as physical flight / fight or in the form of a mental state such as hatred and wishing to “get our own back”. This generally involves ruminations fuelled by the SNS / hypervigilant states.
- 3) Unpleasant C Group: the split second realisation (neuroception) that we are not feeling good enough that is activated at an unconscious level by the Autonomic State C (of the Dorsa Vagal division of the Para-sympathetic Nervous System)

Each of these autonomic states can be seen to / may underpin the feeling states that we experience.

Perceptions /

**PERCEPTIONS**

There is a well known Buddhist saying:

Where there is Perception,  
 There is Deception.

This resonates with the insights of neuroscience. Our perceptions are coloured and to a large extent dictated by the Autonomic State we are in. The state we are in at any point in time is determined by [neuroception](#), the unconscious bodily response to sensing Safety; Danger; or Life Threat – that evolved over eons to protect us. In the modern world (in countries not at war), or those without significant internal conflict, these modalities of Danger and Life Threat may be inappropriately neurocepted. This will lead to a misreading of the situation, and so our perception will be false – leading to deception.

❖ Misperceptions can of course also occur in areas of conflict.

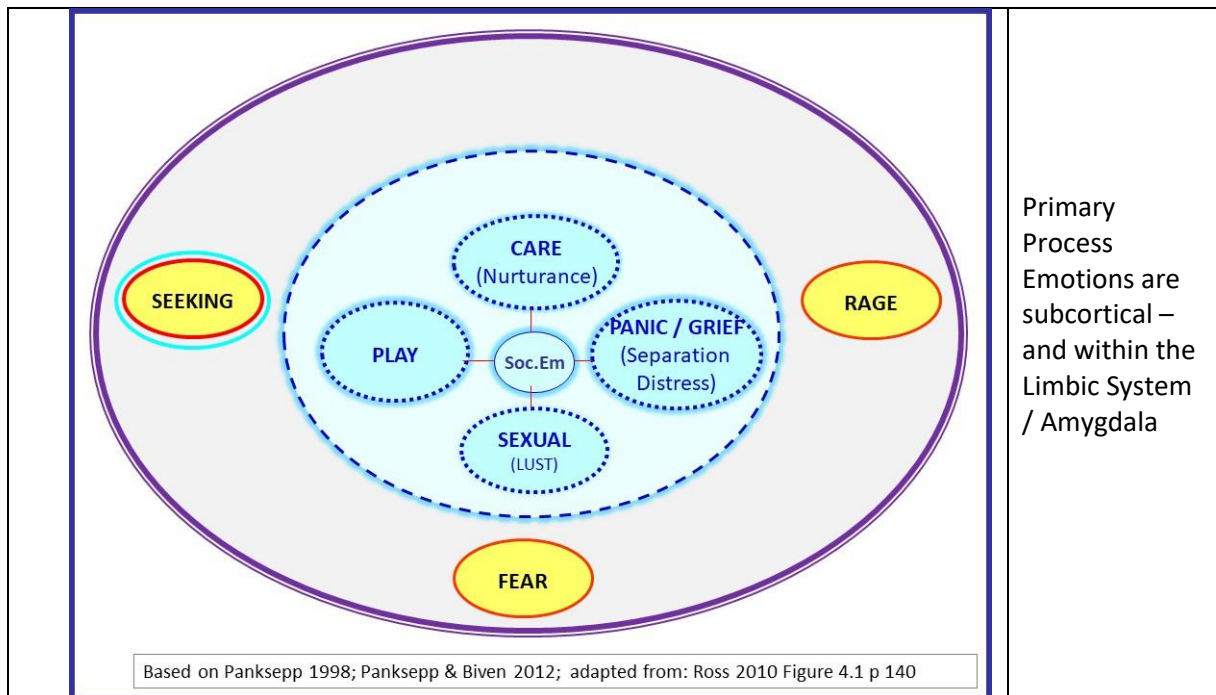
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On the other hand, if we are feeling safe – and so in the Autonomic A State (Ventral Vagal PSNS) associated with wholesome social engagement, then it is much more likely that our perceptions will be accurate.

**EMOTIONS**

Emotions can perhaps helpfully be divided into two basic categories:

- I. Primary Process Emotions that are subcortical – i.e. within the amygdala / limbic System [Panksepp 1998; Panksepp and Biven 2012], and illustrated below.



Primary Process Emotions are subcortical – and within the Limbic System / Amygdala

Based on Panksepp 1998; Panksepp & Biven 2012; adapted from: Ross 2010 Figure 4.1 p 140

**Glossary Figure 2**  
 Our Seven Emotionally Operating Neuro-circuits that we share with mammals  
 Based on Panksepp 1998 (and following his notation)

[Comments on Figure 2/](#)

Comments on Glossary Figure 2

- i. **The outer group of three are to do with survival in the outside world.**
- ii. RAGE activates the Fight Response when in Danger (including family / community).
- iii. FEAR activates our Flight Response when in Danger – and the attack neurocepted as too dangerous to fight.
- iv. SEEKING Circuits enable us to seek water, food, shelter, companionship etc, and modulate wholesome social engagement embracing the inner group [e.g. Porges 2011].
- v. **The inner group of four are the fundamental neuro-circuits of social interaction.**
- vi. SEXUAL Circuits activate our sexual response – and hence reproduction; when associated with CARE and nurturance in an enduring partnership oxytocin will be flowing in both partners and this can facilitate the nurturing of children / offspring. This can be associated with the activation of the monogamy switch [Porges 2011 pp 183-185].
- vii. CARE circuits vital for long standing relationships and the long childhood of our children. These circuits are activated in compassion, empathy – and include caring for ourselves.
- viii. Separation Distress – manifesting in Panksepp’s terms as PANIC in children with their distress calls alerting the parent that they need attention; in adults more usually manifesting as GRIEF following Loss [Panksepp & Biven 2012] – including partnership fractures.
- ix. PLAY circuits vital for children’s health, learning, and well-being; and for well-being of adults.
- x. Mindfulness / Meditative approaches can facilitate the wholesome activation of the inner four, and stimulate appropriate SEEKING – including meaning.

II. Neo-cortically elaborated emotions (that arise on a foundation of the particular EONS)

There are many different classifications of emotions. Some of these can best be regarded as neo-cortically elaborated emotions. For example:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Hatred / ill-will towards others as neo-cortically elaborated RAGE / FEAR.</li> <li>❖ Revenge</li> <li>❖ Jealousy</li> <li>❖ Desire for more than our fair share (even if not consciously recognised – a sort of unconscious greed.) In Buddhist psychology this links in with the concept of craving.</li> </ul> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold;">Associated with / Arising from B or C states</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☸ Compassion for self and others</li> <li>☸ Empathy</li> <li>☸ Heart-Mindfulness</li> <li>☸ Gratitude</li> <li>☸ Generosity</li> <li>☸ Jen (Human Heartedness)</li> <li>☸ Ubuntu</li> </ul> <p style="color: blue; font-weight: bold;">Associated with / Arising from C State</p>
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**Glossary Figure 3**

**Some neocortically generated emotions**

Comment on Figure 2: Davidson would I think regard those in ☸ group as manifestations of our Innate Goodness [Davidson 2018; see also Hamlin et al 2007; and B 25: **Four Key Themes of Neuroscience relevant to our Well-Being**]

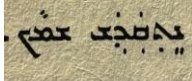
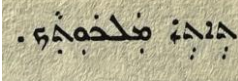
Mind /

<p>Mind Consciousness</p> <p>See also: Figures 2.7A and 2.7B in main text.</p>	<p>Seeds that are activated in <a href="#">Store Consciousness</a> rise up into Mind Consciousness where they manifest as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Mental Formations which can be wholesome, un-wholesome, or of variable states / neutral. These include:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Feelings</li> <li>○ Emotions and other manifestations.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Let us take an example of a toxic, or potentially toxic, emotion, such as anger: The seed of anger<sup>29</sup> is activated in Store Consciousness; it rises up and manifests as a Mental Formation in Mind Consciousness. This can then be exacerbated if we dwell on it again and again in terms of negative / toxic ruminations. We may become deeply troubled by what is a manifestation of the <a href="#">Second Arrow</a>; this may start as a mere irritation, and then pierces us more and more deeply as we dwell upon it. However, “if the practitioner breathes or walks mindfully”:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="color: blue;">It is the energy of mindfulness that will take care of the energy of anger. There is no fighting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Hanh YouTube 21.00 mins</p> </div> <p>The seed of Mindfulness now arises up into Mind Consciousness as a Second Mental Formation, and can now take good care of the Anger; just as the “good enough” [Winnicott 1965] parent can take good care of her or his distressed child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ See Figures 2.7A and 2.7B in main text.</li> </ul>
<p>Merit</p>	<p>In Buddhist psychology, the word merit is used from time to time, and I have always found it a difficult concept; that is, one I did not really understand in terms of its significance. In this context, merit is a translation of the Sanskrit word <i>Punya</i>.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Punya (Sanskrit; Pali, Punna). Term meaning ‘merit’, ‘meritorious action’, or ‘virtue’.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Keown 2003 p 224</p> </div> <p>Lama Yeshe Losal Rinpoche, in “From a Mountain in Tibet”, discusses Four Foundation practices (of Tibetan Buddhist approaches) called Ngöndro.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>The third is Mandal Offering, which is concerned with accumulating merit and wisdom. Merit means generating a momentum of positive energy in the mind that provides the context for realising that all things are interconnected, so not separate or set apart. This realisation is wisdom.....</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Lama Yeshe 2020 pp 113-114</p> </div> <p>“Generating a momentum of positive energy in the mind” is a lovely and life enhancing phrase. It is like an anti-dote to our negative thoughts / ruminations.</p> <p>“All things are interconnected” is the essence of <a href="#">Inter-Being</a>. From this perspective, all humans inter-are with all other humans, animals, plants; and indeed the whole cosmos. In this context /</p>

<sup>29</sup> Anger simply as an example: it could equally be that of irritation; jealousy, plotting revenge etc.

<p>Merit <i>continued</i></p>	<p>this context, happiness is only true happiness if it involves working for the common good for all beings, nature, and mother earth. Thich Nhat Hanh looks at this in terms of “Call me by my true name.” [e.g. Hanh 2016 pp 79-81]</p> <p>Happiness and merit in this sense complement each other.</p> <p>See also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ F 11: Constructive Feeling Meditation: Inter-Being Part II: Meditations in and around “Call me by my True Names”.</li> <li>❖ <a href="#">Happiness I, II, III, and IV</a>; this includes reference to the discussion of the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu [Joy – <i>Finding Happiness in Troubled Times</i>].</li> </ul>
<p>Meta-awareness I (meta-attention)</p>	<p>“Being able to track the quality of one’s own awareness – for example, noticing when your mind wanders or you’ve made a mistake.” [Lapate et al 2016].</p>
<p>Meta-awareness II</p> <p><a href="#">Adapted from glossary of B28</a></p> <p>Automatic Pilot: see Williams and Penman 2011 – e.g. pp 36-38. Automatic Pilot can overlap with the driven mode. Meditation facilitates the Being Mode and Being truly Present.</p>	<p>A complementary perspective on meta-awareness is given by Dahl et al.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “...An awareness of the processes of conscious experience, such as recognition that one is expressing an emotion, a thought, or a sensory perception as it occurs in real time.</li> <li>○ It “is involved when one suddenly recognises an emotion before it provokes a reaction, for example, and also when one suddenly realises that one has been ‘on autopilot’ while engaged in a daily routine.” [Dahl, Wilson-Mendenhall, and Davidson 2020 p 32198]</li> </ul> <p>The ability to realise, to recognise, that we are entering the B state before we become entrapped in it and react inappropriately, is an important form of meta-awareness. In this way we can prevent ourselves inadvertently responding on “automatic pilot”. Naming and befriending distressing feelings / emotions, as in Breathing Exercise 7 and 8 of the Full Awareness of Breathing, is a form of meta-awareness.</p>
<p>Nāmarūpa (Sanskrit: नामरूप)</p>	<p>The following I have found a helpful starting point for understanding Nāmarūpa, from Wikipedia.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>This term is used in Buddhism to refer to the constituents of a living being: <i>nāma</i> refers to the mental, while <i>rūpa</i> refers to the physical. The Buddhist <i>nāma</i> and <i>rūpa</i> are mutually dependent, and not separable; as <i>nāmarūpa</i>, they designate an individual being.<sup>[a]</sup> Nāmarūpa is also referred to as the five skandhas, “the psycho-physical organism”, “mind-and-matter,” and “mentality-and-materiality”.</p> <p>Nāmarūpa (Sanskrit: नामरूप) is used in Buddhism to refer to the constituents of a living being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>nāma</i> is typically considered to refer to the mental component of the person, while</li> <li>❖ <i>rūpa</i> refers to the physical.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Namarupa">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Namarupa</a> bullet points and layout changed <sup>(R)</sup></p> </div> <p>The great relevance of this is that in Buddhism there is no mind body dualism, as occurred following Descartes; though this may have been to mis-represent Descartes [Panksepp 1998 p 420 note 34]. See also McGilchrist 2021.</p>
<p>Nethqadash shmakh /</p>	



<p>Nethqadash shmakh</p>  <p>“Hallowed be the name”</p> <p>Teytey malkuthakh</p>  <p>“Thy Kingdom come”</p>	<p>The Aramaic version of Yeshua’s original “Lord’s Prayer”, has been translated by Douglas-Klotz into English [Douglas-Klotz 1990]. This gives insights into the essential meaning of this prayer which has perhaps been lost. Yeshua spoke in Aramaic when giving his teachings. Subsequently, the gospels etc were often written in Greek, and it was these Greek translations that were generally then translated into English (e.g. the King James Version).</p> <p>Nethquadas shmakh is initially rendered by Douglas-Klotz as:</p> <div data-bbox="571 571 1316 750" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Focus your light within us – make it useful: as the rays of a beacon show the way.              Help us breathe only holy breath feeling only you – this creates a shrine inside of wholeness.....              Douglas-Klotz 1990 p 16</p> </div> <p>Teytey malkuthakh he initially poetically translates as:</p> <div data-bbox="571 862 1220 1243" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Create your reign of unity now –              Through our fiery hearts              and willing hands.              Let your counsel rule our lives,              Clearing out intention              for co-creation.....              Unite our “I can” to yours,              so that we walk as kings and queens              with every creature.....              Douglas-Klotz 1990 p 19</p> </div> <p>In commenting on “Hallowed be the name....thy kingdom (or queendom come”) in the prayer, Douglas-Klotz says:</p> <div data-bbox="486 1400 1420 1556" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Once we have created an interior temple of peace and devotion, this heart place can be used to clarify our goals and to break through to a new sense of Creativity in our lives.              Douglas-Klotz 1990 p 21</p> </div>
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Please see 4.1: Appendix I: “Further Meditations on Linking Body and Mind” in which I suggest that the essence of Thich Nhat Hanh’s extended meditation on the various parts of our body is that our bodies are sacred.

This seems to link with the concept of creating an “interior temple of peace” during our prayers / meditations / devotions, whatever spiritual path we are following.

To recap /

Nethqadash shmakh continued /

To recap:

✿ Teytey malkuthakh Nethqadash shmakh “Hallowed be the name. Thy Kingdom (Queendom) come...” includes the concept: “Focus your light within us – make it useful” [Douglas-Klotz 1990 p 16]. This is as if it were a prelude to “creating an internal temple of peace...”, and is in harmony with the dialogue of the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu (see [Happiness III](#) above).

Aramaic is a very different language from English, and each letter of each word in the original Aramaic can have several meanings or implications. In order to communicate the essence of each sentence of the Lord’s Prayer, Douglas-Klotz devotes a whole page of poetic meanings to that sentence of the prayer, that include original nuances relating to the time Yeshua spoke these words.

It may well be that the original Aramaic words of Yeshua were closer to the concepts of the Dao / Tao, and that of Inter-Being – than the traditional translation of his words would have us believe. In this connection, it seems that different religions in their original wholeness can manifest as spiritual paths for the well being of communities. In this sense all true religions inter-are. Those that at times express the idea that theirs is the only true religion is an affront to other religions / spiritual paths, and show an ignorance (no blame per se) of the concept of Inter-Being.

For further information and insight, please refer to:

Douglas-Klotz, Neil: 1990 Prayers of the Cosmos – *Meditations on the Aramaic Words of Jesus*; Translation and Commentary by Neil Douglas-Klotz

Neuroception

Neuroception is the ability of the animal / mammal / human to detect safety, danger, or life threat. This occurs at an unconscious level. Our responses, feelings, and behaviour are largely dependent upon which state we are in – i.e. A, B, or C. Our  
 ✦ “Story follows our State” [Dana 2018].

This is the result of our perceptions, feelings and thoughts being, to a large extent, dependent upon the State we are in at that moment.

Note that neuroception is not always correct; e.g. when a stick is mistaken for a snake; or when a snake is mistaken for stick.

✿ During evolution there was a tendency for a stick being mistaken for a snake more often than a snake to be mistaken for a stick.

✿ Reason: those who saw a snake and thought it was a stick did not survive. In other words, their neuroception activated the A State, making them feel safe.

✦ It should have alerted them to Danger and Beware, the B State, with the activation of flight / fight (SNS mobilisation in context of danger / fear).

Childhood trauma and / or abuse of children can lead to disturbing *adult* Habit Energies that result in inappropriate neuroception – e.g. when any adult (male or female) may be pattern matched (neurocepted) by the *subject* with a previous memory (unconscious) of a threatening parent, and this inappropriately triggers a FEAR or RAGE response.

Our perceptions of the world will tend to be false / one sided if we are in the Autonomic B (mobilisation in the context of fear / Sympathetic Nervous System activation) or C (immobilisation in the context of fear) Dorsal Vagal PSNS State. These states can enable us to survive; they are there for us being impartial.

See also Perceptions in section on [Mental Formations](#).

<p><a href="#">RAIN of Compassion</a></p>	<p>In her book, Radical Acceptance, Tara Brach has a chapter entitled: “The RAIN of Compassion: <i>an applied meditation for healing and Freedom</i>” [Brach 2023 pp 213-239].</p> <p>RAIN stands for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☸ R: Recognise what is going on;</li> <li>☸ A: Allow the Experience to be there, just as it is;</li> <li>☸ I: Investigate with Interest and Care;</li> <li>☸ N: Nurture with Self-Compassion.</li> </ul> <p>This is very much within the modalities of Thich Nhat Hanh’s Teachings, and the Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing.</p> <p>Also note that Investigating phenomena is one of the Seven Factors of Awakening in Buddhist metapsychology; the phenomena here being our own distress and pain (which exercises 5-8 for the Full Awareness of Breathing embrace).</p> <p>The front cover of the 2023 edition of her book includes Thich Nhat Hanh’s comment: “Nourishing and Healing”, referring to Brach’s book.</p>
<p>Reflective and Awareness Building (Practices)                  (Cf. “Mental Training”)</p> <p><a href="#">With thanks to Ruth Sewell for this wholesome phrase</a></p>	<p>We often talk about mental training, yet in the context of psychotherapies, Heart-Mindfulness, Meditation and Autogenic Training the term mental training is not really appropriate, as Ruth Sewell, an Autogenic Therapist colleague, has pointed out. Her term Reflective and Awareness Building is much more apposite.</p> <p>✚ This glossary entry briefly reflects on these matters, and is itself an abbreviated version of the more extensive glossary entry in the companion article B 28.</p>
<p>Some year ago Howard Cutler, in conversations with the Dalai Lama, subsequently wrote:</p>	
<p>The systematic training of the mind – the cultivation of happiness, the genuine inner transformation by deliberately selecting and focusing on positive mental states and challenging negative mental states, is possible because of the very structure and function of the brain..... Neuroscientists have documented the fact that the brain can design new patterns, new combinations of nerve cells and neurotransmitters (chemicals that transmit messages between nerve cells) in response to new input. In fact, our brains are malleable, ever changing, reconfiguring their wiring according to new thoughts and experiences.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Howard Cutler 1998 p 31                  (in conversations with the Dali Lama)</p>	
<p>This is a wonderful and far reaching perspective. We can go further still by adopting Ruth Sewell’s phrase for such learnings and growth as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Reflective and Awareness Building (Practices).</li> </ul> <p>Reflective and Awareness Building is essentially experiential, and hence the domain of the Right Hemisphere, rather than the analytical modalities of the Left Brain. (See also McGilchrist 2021).</p> <p>Ruth Sewell comments on the term mental training:</p> <p>☸ “I resist this term as it is, potentially, a fierce / controlling term and strongly indicating a heavy cognitive bias. I don’t have a specific replacement, but I tend to go for reflective and awareness building...”.</p> <p>We can see the Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing as an example of a Reflective and Awareness Building Practice, and one that reduces negative ruminations and the <a href="#">Second Arrow</a>.</p> <p>In addition, Reflective and Awareness Building links in with Luis de Rivera’s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ “Amplified State of Consciousness Induction Therapies” [de Rivera 2018 p 17].</li> </ul>	

<p><a href="#">Sarbat da bhala</a></p>	<p>By a wonderful synchronicity, Thought for Today (BBC Radio 4, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7.46) was given by the Professor of Sikh Studies at the University of Birmingham, Professor Jagbir Jhutti-Johal. There is an Israeli woman in the present Israeli Palestinian conflict who is ferrying Palestinians in need of hospital care to Israeli hospitals, despite the ongoing war. When asked about this, she replied:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✿ I am fighting to be good.</p> <p>This reflects the Sikh tradition and concept of Sarbat da bhala, which means blessing to all people, or literally "may everyone prosper", whatever religion or ethnic background.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>To put this in very concise and clear language, the term invokes the Sikh to request, pray and ask the Almighty for the well-being of all of humanity, prosperity for everyone (regardless of religion) in the worldwide community, global peace for the entire planet.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarbat_da_bhala">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarbat_da_bhala</a></p> </div> <p>Professor Jagbir Jhutti-Johal went on to refer to the tenth guru of the Sikhs in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Some Sikhs complained that one of their members had been providing water to members of the enemy on the battlefield. When the guru asked this Sikh why he had done this, he replied:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✿ "I saw no Mongols or Sikhs on the battlefield, I only saw human beings."</p> <p>The tenth guru replied: "you have understood the teachings of Sarbat da bhala perfectly."</p> <p>She (Jagbir Jhutti-Johal ) went on to say that these two reflections: "I am fighting to be good" and "I saw no Mongols or Sikhs on the battlefield, I only saw human beings", is at the heart of what it means to be human.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="#">Today - 16/12/2023 - BBC Sounds</a></p> <p>This can be seen as a form of Well-Being / true happiness for all – in the spirit of the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu; and that of <a href="#">ubuntu</a>.</p>
<p>Seligman, Martin E.P.</p>	<p>Martin Seligman has been a pioneer in the development of Positive Psychology in North America during the last several decades, and helped change the direction of research towards positive approaches towards health and ill-health.</p> <p>See for example:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✿ Seligman 2011: <i>Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-Being</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Martin Elias Peter Seligman (/ˈsɛlɪɡmən/; born August 12, 1942) is an American psychologist, educator, and author of self-help books. Seligman is a strong promoter within the scientific community of his theories of well-being and positive psychology.<sup>[1]</sup> His theory of learned helplessness is popular among scientific and clinical psychologists</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="#">Martin Seligman - Wikipedia</a></p> </div> <p>See also: Seligman, Martin E.P 1998: American Psychological Association Presidential Address (President's Address from The APA 1998 Annual Report, appearing in the August, 1999 American Psychologist.)</p>

<p>Second Arrow</p>	<p>There are many things in life that can result in us suffering. In Buddhist psychology the perceived cause is sometime referred to as the ‘first arrow’. However, what can cause us to suffer deeply is not this, but rather what our minds tend to make of this. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ We may get a bad cold; and start to say to ourselves: “Why me? Why should this happen to me right now at this important time in my life?”</li> <li>➤ We may be irritated by someone at college, at work, or in the family – and embark on negative ruminations about them in which we plot to get our own back – feeding the negative wolf within with hatred and ill-will towards the other.</li> </ul> <p>These are both examples of our response (the second arrow) inflicting more suffering within us than the original incident. Meditation, Mindfulness, Autogenic Training, and <a href="#">Reflective and Awareness Building</a> practices / approaches, can help us to prevent or deflect this second arrow from penetrating.</p> <p>The Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing can help to reduce our tendency to allow the Second Arrow to penetrate – or even to develop at all.</p>
<p><u>Revised from glossary of:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ D 11: <a href="#">Sukha</a>: Paths of Well-Being, PSNS Afferents, and Inner Warmth: from Duhkha to Sukha.</li> </ul> <p>➤ See also linked article: D8: Duhkha II: The Second Arrow and Sympathetic Afferents</p>	
<p>Store Consciousness</p>	<p>In Buddhist metapsychology, consciousness has two essential parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Store Consciousness (unconscious), and</li> <li>ii. Mind Consciousness (conscious).</li> </ol> <p>Within Store Consciousness, we have seeds that include the fifty one <a href="#">Mental Formations</a>. If they are activated, they rise up and manifest in Mind Consciousness. For example: we all have seeds of anger; these are normally be lying dormant (as if the seed is asleep). If this seed of anger is activated, it arises and manifests in Mind Consciousness as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Anger; the Emotion of Anger...</li> <li>❖ Anger can be very close, neuro-physiologically, to RAGE [Panksepp 1998].</li> </ul> <p>On the other hand, we also have in our Store Consciousness seeds such as these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ CARE and nurturing;</li> <li>❖ Compassion;</li> <li>❖ Wholesome PLAY.</li> </ul> <p>See also: Figures 2.7A and 2.7B in main text that illustrate the relationship between Store Consciousness and Mind Consciousness.</p>
<p>Sukha (followed by Dukha)                  Imported for web article D 11                  A State of Flourishing</p>	<p>In many ways this can be seen in terms of the opposite, or anti-dote, to dukkha. In western psychology, it has been assumed that all emotions are normal in the sense that they have developed during evolution, and in that sense have a valid role to play in our lives. In Buddhist psychology, no such assumptions are made in that certain emotions are regarded as being inherently toxic, such as the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <a href="#">Toxic Trio</a> (see glossary of D 11, p 66).</li> </ul> <p>The Dalai Lama suggests that Happiness is the state that all humans seek [Dalai Lama &amp; Cutler1998]. As discussed in the relevant sections of the glossary, happiness is perhaps best seen in terms of <a href="#">Well-Being</a>.                  Sukha can /</p>

<p>Sukha continued</p>	<p>Sukha can be developed through mindfulness and watering the positive seeds within.                  Ekman et al have this to say about happiness:</p>
<p>Buddhists and psychologists alike believe that emotions strongly influence people’s thoughts, words, and actions and that, at times, they help people in their pursuit of transient pleasures and satisfaction. From a Buddhist perspective, however, some emotions are conducive to genuine and enduring happiness and others are not. A Buddhist term for such happiness is sukha which may be defined in this context as a state of flourishing that arises from mental balance and insight into the nature of reality. Rather than a fleeting emotion or mood aroused by sensory or conceptual stimuli, sukha is an enduring trait that arises from a mind in a state of equilibrium and entails a conceptually unstructured and unfiltered awareness of the true nature of reality.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Ekman et al 2005; pp 59-60</p>	
	<p>Behind this statement is the Buddhist concept that suffering, especially in terms of the <a href="#">second arrow</a> (and D-8), comes about through <a href="#">ignorance</a> (<a href="#">glossary of D 11 p 40</a>) of the true nature of reality and life – the overcoming of such ignorance embraces a realisation of the inter-connectedness of all things; which also implies that no one thing or person has a “permanent separate self”. Such ignorance dissolves with a growing awareness of the inter-being nature of all things.</p>
<p>Dukha</p>	<p>Dukha and Sukha inter-are</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>From glossary of D 8: Duhkha II: The Second Arrow and Sympathetic Afferents</b></p> <p>Duhkha is often translated simply as suffering. This is not very helpful, as it may lead us to assume that the whole of Buddhist psychology is about suffering, and this is grossly misleading. Sakyamuni recognised what can be regarded as the unsatisfactory nature of life, our tendency to crave for things that we cannot have, and to negatively ruminate about what has happened in the past and what may happen or not happen in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If we are not careful / mindful, this sort of mental chatter can occupy us much of the time, so that we fail to be in the present moment; we fail to see the raindrops on the branch, the glint of sunlight on snow crystals, or the smile on a child’s face.</li> <li>○ A mental doing mode takes over, and we become divorced from Being; and Being in the Present Moment.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">All this is part of Duhkha.</p> <p>Sakyamuni was perhaps the first Human Being to really recognise this; after having experimented with various very strict teachings disciplines, he realised that the way to <a href="#">Sukha</a> was through what he called the middle path of mindful practices, and that these practices could greatly reduce dukkha for ourselves and those we are with. These practices embrace the four Ennobling Truths (see appendix of D 8) and the Eight-fold Path. He suggested that we try these paths; and that if we find them helpful, then continue with them. If we do not find them helpful, this may be because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✿ Our practice in not based on Right View [see Hanh 1998 pp 51-58].</li> </ul>	
<p><u>Ubuntu /</u></p>	




<p>Ubuntu</p> <p>For a fuller exposition, please see the glossary entry of B 28</p> <p>Ubuntu is only possible in a community / culture in which the essential Autonomic default position is that of being the A State (Ventral Vagal).</p>	<p>An African concept that in essence is a reflection of Inter-Being [Hanh 2012 p 55-58]. The spirit of ubuntu can perhaps best be described in the following short story:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid purple; padding: 10px;"> <p>An anthropologist once proposed a game to some children of an African tribe. He put a basket of fruit near a tree and told them that whoever got there first won all the sweet fruits. When he gave them the signal to run, they took each other’s hands, running together, and then sat down in a circle and enjoyed their fruits.</p> <p>The anthropologist was perplexed, and asked them why they chose to run as a group when they could have had more fruit individually. After some silence, one child spoke up and said:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">☸ “UBUNTU. How can one of us be happy if all the other ones are sad?”</p> <p>‘UBUNTU’ in the Xhosa culture means: “I am because we are.”</p> </div>
<p>Vedana</p> <p>Modified and abbreviated from glossary of: B 28: An Experiential Introduction to (Autonomic) ABC States</p>	<p>A term used extensively by William and Penman in their 2023 book “Deeper Mindfulness” [Williams &amp; Penman 2023]. Let us turn to Keown for an independent understanding of vedana.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 10px;"> <p>“The psychological faculty of experiencing sensations. Vedanā is the faculty that is said to “taste” or “relish” experience, and these experiences are classified into three kinds: as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral.....”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[Keown 2003 p 324].</p> </div>
<p>Williams and Penman emphasise that vedana has something of an elusive quality, and:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 10px;"> <p>.....it will always pay to remember that we are referring to a flavour of awareness, and not to a rigid concept that can be hedged in by words or definitions. Feeling tone is something that you feel in mind, body and ‘spirit’, but its true quality will always remain slightly ineffable.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Williams &amp; Penman 2023 p 4</p> </div> <p>Perhaps this is also true of the essence of consciousness and life – and in this sense overlaps with Luis de Rivera’s concept of <a href="#">Vivencia</a> [de Rivera 2018 pp 29-38].</p> <p>The realisation of a feeling tone overlaps with some aspects of meta-awareness – and in the context of Autonomic Nervous System ABC states discussed in B 28 to recognising which state we are in.</p> <p>❖ See also Feeling in Glossary Section on Mental Formations for a brief description of these correlates, p 41.</p>	
<p>Vivencia /</p>	

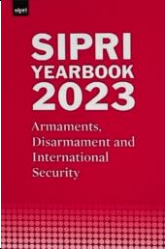
<p>Vivencia</p>	<p>A Spanish term used by Luis de Rivera that does not have an exact English translation [de Rivera 2018]. It is sometimes rendered as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ “Live Experience” with perhaps added associations of the numinous.</li> </ul> <p>Such live experiences are the opposite of left-brain analytical thinking. If we go out in the country at night and look at the starry heavens, or the emerging bud of a tree in spring, then we can have a live experience if we are there in that present moment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The non-striving focused attention of the Standard Exercises in AT allows us to tune into the live-experience of the body at that moment, and in each subsequent moment.</li> <li>○ In essence, the Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing is experientially vivencia in each part of the sixteen exercises.</li> </ul> <p>Modern urban life, with all its hustles and bustles, may result in us having days on end without vivencia, without being in the present moment. Yet, whatever age we live in, this is also an attitude of mind:</p> <p><a href="#">Well-Being</a> (partly) depends upon us having daily live experiences.</p>
<p>Well-Being (Happiness)</p> <p>Adapted from E-03 Glossary on web, itself an adaptation from Ross 2010 Glossary.</p> <p>See also <a href="#">ubuntu</a></p> <p>In this context, true happiness is inter-related with both ubuntu and Right View. See also: Right View [see Hanh 1998 pp 51-58].</p>	<p>Dr Martin Seligman, a psychologist at the University of Pennsylvania, has been one of the key players in the development of Positive Psychology in North America in recent decades.</p> <p>Seligman suggests that we can regard happiness as embracing three components. Angela Clow, Professor of psychophysiology at Westminster University, suggests that the concept of Well-Being may be a better word than happiness for British (as compared with North American) citizens [Professor Angela Clow in a talk on "Stress, Health and Happiness" at the Edinburgh International Science Festival on 09.04.2006].</p> <p>Dr Seligman's definition on happiness can be reframed as Well-Being as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Pleasure / positive emotion;</li> <li>❖ Engaged, goal directed pursuits / occupations. i.e. we are involved in, and committed to various pursuits / activities; the construct of Well-Being is not one of a passive "happy" state, but one that also embraces engaged – and I would add mindful – activity.</li> <li>❖ Meaning; and / or having a connection to some larger purpose. (This might be, for example, the ecology of our planet in the context of climate change.) [See also Frankl 1946; 1952.]</li> </ul> <p>(Based on and paraphrased from Davidson 2005; with some additions).</p> <p>Thus Well-Being, in its deeper sense, is clearly far more than an individual matter. It also links in with the concept of the inter-relatedness of all things, and thus mindfulness. In this sense the Well Being of each individual is intimately linked with the wellbeing of all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ See also A3 on website: <a href="http://www.atdynamics.co.uk">www.atdynamics.co.uk</a></li> </ul>

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