

*Quenching Without Remainder  
&  
The Fruit of Meditation*



*Buddhadasa Bhikkhu*

Cover : “The Archer King Ready for the Last Fight with Māra” painting (details) at the Buddhadāsa Indapañño Archives, Bangkok, based on an ancient Thai book *Turtle Whiskers, Rabbit Antlers, and Frog Horn*

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## Anumodanā

To all Dhamma Comrades, those helping to spread Dhamma:

Break out the funds to spread Dhamma to let Faithful Trust flow,  
Broadcast majestic Dhamma to radiate long-living joy.

Release unexcelled Dhamma to tap the spring of Virtue,  
Let safely peaceful delight flow like a cool mountain stream.

Dhamma leaves of many years sprouting anew, reaching out,  
To unfold and bloom in the Dhamma Centers of all towns.

To spread lustrous Dhamma and in hearts glorified plant it,  
Before long, weeds of sorrow, pain, and affliction will flee.

As Virtue revives and resounds throughout Thai society,  
All hearts feel certain love toward those born, aging, and dying.

Congratulations and Blessings to all Dhamma Comrades,  
You who share Dhamma to widen the people's prosperous joy.

Heartiest appreciation from Buddhadāsa Indapañño,  
Buddhist Science ever shines beams of Bodhi long-lasting.

In grateful service, fruits of merit and wholesome successes,  
Are all devoted in honor to Lord Father Buddha.

Thus may the Thai people be renowned for their Virtue,  
May perfect success through Buddhist Science awaken their hearts.

May the King and His Family live long in triumphant strength,  
May joy long endure throughout this our word upon earth.

from

*Buddha dāsa Indapañño*

Mokkhabalārāma

Chaiya, 2 November 2530

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# Quenching Without Remainder

*Quenching without remainder* is approached in two ways. In the first, one habitually maintains the quenching without remainder of the attachment expressed as ‘this is I’ and ‘this is mine.’ In the second, when the body is about to break up one lets go of everything, including body, life, and mind, letting them be quenched for the last time and by not allowing any fuel or desire whatsoever for another birth to be left. One should use the first method as the regular daily practice. When the body is about to break up, or in an accident when one does not die on the spot but has some full and clear consciousness left for a time, one should use the latter method. If one dies suddenly and is quenched with the consciousness of one who has practiced according to the first, then the result is similar, that is, one does not wish to the reborn.

*The first method* should be practiced regularly, before bedtime, fresh upon getting up, or whenever one has the spare time to cleanse the mind. One should compose the mind until it becomes steady by counting breaths or by whatever method suits one best. This should be done for a time, and then one should investigate various things in order to not be attached to them and to not cling to the view that they are one's own. Let there be no exception whatsoever. See all things as merely dependent factors circulating in the wheel of life. If one is attached to anything, one is bound to suffer immediately. Circulation in the wheel of life is a direct suffering. Every time one is born, one suffers. However one is born, it is suffering. One suffers according to the type of birth one undergoes. For instance, if one is born as a son, one suffers as a son. If one is born as a mother, one suffers as a mother. If one is born as a rich person, one suffers as a rich person. If one is born as a poor person, one suffers as a poor person. If one is born as a good person, one suffers as a good person. If one is born as a bad person, one suffers as a bad person. If one is born as a fortunate person, one suffers as a fortunate person. If one is born as an unfortunate person, one suffers as an unfortunate person. Therefore, it is better not to be born as anyone. That is what we call 'quenching without remainder.'

When we speak of 'birth,' we mean not only birth from a mother's womb but also birth in the mind of the idea 'I am such.' This idea arises from time to time and in countless forms: I am a daughter; I am a poor person or a rich person; I am a good-looking person or an ugly person; I am a fortunate person or an unfortunate person; and so on. These are what we call

grasping thoughts of ‘I am such’ and ‘mine is such.’ This ‘I’ and ‘mine’ is grasping. It is born from the womb of its mother, ignorance, and inseminated by its father, craving. It is born thousands of times each day, and whenever it is born, suffering is unavoidable. If one does not keep the senses under careful watch, whenever the eye sees forms, or the ear hears sounds, or the nose smells, or the tongue tastes, or the body touches through the skin, or the mind thinks of past events and makes them into a complete story, the word or idea ‘I’ will be born immediately. And as soon as the ‘I’ arises, suffering must also occur. Therefore, one must be careful never to let the ‘I’ poke its head out from its mother’s womb. When the eye sees forms, or the ear hears sounds, and so on, one should have the wisdom to know how to handle them, or one should simply remain unperturbed. The act of seeing or hearing is quite all right provided that one never allows the ‘I’ to be constructed out of feeling and desire connected with the object that is seen or heard. Then we can say that the ‘I’ is not born, it has no existence. When it is not born it does not die, and so there is no suffering. This is what I mean when I say that birth means not only physical birth direct from the mother’s womb but also the birth of the idea ‘I’ from its own mother’s womb — ignorance. Here, quenching without remainder means not allowing the ‘I’ to arise. Since the ‘I’ has ignorance as its mother, one should kill its mother with knowledge, with the wisdom that there is nothing worth being attached to.

The thought of ‘I’ may also arise when one is not mindful. If one tends to be unmindful often, this can be cured by being ashamed or afraid. One is ashamed that one has given way to ignorance, which is the chief characteristic

of undeveloped minds and unworthy of those who aspire to true knowledge. One is afraid because there is nothing more dangerous than the birth of a thought dominated by ignorance. It opens the way to craving, the father of egoism. Craving and egoism are the double gates of hell that lead to all states of suffering. In this way, uncorrected ignorance leads to ruin. When there is often shame and fear of this kind, mindfulness will gradually get better, until one becomes a person who consistently follows the road to quenching without remainder.

Every day, before bedtime and on getting up, one ought to keep an account of this business of cultivating the way towards quenching without remainder, for one should know the income and expenditure all the time. This is done by taking a survey of one's thoughts and actions. It is more beneficial than prayers and should be practiced as an adjunct to one's regular meditation, either before or after it.

The practice of quenching without remainder is not connected with gazing at an object, or seeing colors or visions with closed eyes, or seeing strange miracles or sacred beings. It is concerned with intelligent wisdom and direct clear awareness. Perfect mindfulness can produce bodily and mental lightness, an indescribable bodily and mental ease. But one must never think of this, because to do so would make this lightness and ease a source of new grasping. If that happens, the 'I' will never be quenched but will remain forever. It will be born endlessly and will be the cause of even greater worry than before. Those who are not successful in practicing insight are those who want to grasp happiness. They aim at Nibbāna according to their own way of

grasping at happiness. The ‘I’ always arises in whatever view of Nibbāna a person grasps. It will never be quenched in that way. Therefore, if one wants something to contemplate, one must contemplate that there is nothing to cling to, not even such a thing as Nibbāna. *Sabbe dhammā nālaṃ abhinivesāya* (nothing whatsoever should be grasped at).

To summarize, one must constantly have a clear understanding of nonattachment, every day and night, awake or asleep. One should maintain intelligent wisdom all the time. Never let the grasping of ‘I’ or ‘this is mine’ occur. Then there will be living in quenching without remainder — in the state of selflessness, having only Dhamma in a mind that is void of ‘self.’ Then it can be said that ‘self’ is not born and there is only quenching without remainder. If one becomes unmindful one way or another and the idea ‘I’ arises, one should be willing to start again immediately. Do not be discouraged or get tired of this mental exercise as we do with our physical exercise. Let the body and mind receive the correct training together. Whenever one practices, with every in-breathing and out-breathing, one should maintain wisdom. Then mistakes will never arise.

*The second method* of practice is done when one is about to die. I should say that it is a very easy practice, like jumping down steps when one is already falling over them. It would be difficult only if one dares not jump when one is falling over the steps. This would be painful because one would fall down in a hopeless manner. When one is about to die, the body cannot continue any longer. The mind, or ‘owner of the house,’ should therefore jump

down, too. At that time, one should have the wisdom to see clearly that nothing is worth grasping; nothing is worth hoping for, existing for, or being born again for. Let it end. Let the curtain drop on the last scene because whatever one touches, in whatever form one is born, it is all suffering. If one can practice this, the mind will lose its hope, and when the hope is destroyed there will be nothing to cling to. The mind will then be quenched with the body, leaving no fuel behind for another birth. By ‘fuel,’ I mean hope or desire or clinging to something in particular. Suppose, for instance, that one is attacked by a fierce animal coming from behind. Or one might be run over by a car, crushed by a falling building, or suddenly murdered. Should there be any consciousness left, even for a second, one should, at that moment of death, direct one’s mind towards quenching without remainder and clarify this idea in the mind in the way that one is used to practicing every day and night. Then allow the mind to be quenched. This is ‘jumping down the steps’ towards quenching without remainder.

If death comes without one being conscious of it, whether from a sudden accident or because one dies in one’s sleep, one should regard the practice of mindfulness of quenching without remainder, which has been aimed at and contemplated consistently, as the basis of quenching. Then there will still be quenching without remainder.

If one suffers from great pains or torturing illness, one should open one’s mind to receive this great pain and make a mental remark: “The more painful it is, the sooner quenching without remainder will come. Thanks to the

pain!” When this is done, the joy in the Dhamma will curb all pains. They will not appear or will be slight at most. One shall thereby be restored to one’s normal sanity and will be able to laugh at the pain itself.

Suppose that one suffers from an illness that causes paralysis and one is to die of it. One should hold that one’s ‘self’ has ended when paralysis numbs the body. The body that is left with winking eyes has no meaning. This is because one’s mind was inclined to quenching without remainder before one was taken ill, when one still had perfect control of the body. Although the life is not yet ended, when control of the body is lost there is nothing left to be called ‘I’ or ‘mine,’ so that should be the end of it all. But even when one’s body is still in good condition, one can complete the quenching without remainder with the help of intelligent wisdom. Such quenching without remainder will remain effective during illness, even in the case of paralysis as mentioned before. There will be no possibility of being defeated by pain, since one will have destroyed the ‘I’ completely while the body was still in sound condition.

To summarize, one must understand the two methods of practicing quenching without remainder. One must have a mind filled with wisdom, clearly understanding that there is nothing to hold on to or to grasp. In this mind completely void of clinging and attachment, there is no ‘I’ or ‘this is mine.’ There is only Dhamma, the absolute deliverance, which is called ‘The Three Gems’ or ‘the path of deliverance,’ however one speaks of the sublime hope of those who cling. Those who practice quenching without remainder will not cling to these things. This is quenching without remainder — Nibbāna. In its full sense,

‘*ni*’ means without any remainder and ‘*bāna*’ means going or blowing out. Nibbāna, therefore, means going out without anything remaining. It has the characteristics of a meaning, a practice, and a blessing as described above.

Do all work with void mind.  
Return all fruits to voidness.  
Eat from the storehouse of voidness.  
Die to oneself from the very start.

**Dhamma, Blessings, and Loving Kindness  
to all beings.**

# The Fruit of Meditation

*The fruit of meditation* is twofold. The first fruit is a new kind of happiness that we have never had before. This happiness is not based on sense objects. Sense objects cause only emotional happiness, which is nothing but potential suffering. The happiness derived from meditation is different. It is inexpressibly cool and calm. We may say that this happiness is a preliminary taste of the realization of Nibbāna, of freedom from the defilements. Although Nibbāna has not yet been realized, one may compare it with this taste of Nibbāna, with this new experience, the only differences being those of subtlety, quantity, and duration. This happiness is the first fruit of meditation. It is called *diṭṭhadhammikattha* (immediate benefit). If one's energy is exhausted after having reached this far, one's effort will not have been totally in vain. One will still have profited.

The second fruit of meditation is that the mind is fully prepared to have penetrating insight into the nature of all phenomena, for practicing meditation is like sharpening a knife for cutting cleanly, or like polishing a glass so as to see clearly. A well-trained mind is amenable, like a tame monkey or elephant. It is active, strong, and unwavering under the impulses of passion, anger, hate, envy, and the like. Such a mind cannot be overpowered by these defilements. When these evil forces try to stimulate the mind, there arises a sense of humor and one laughs at them. In this way, they cannot distract the mind that is well trained.

When your mind is endowed with these two fruits of meditation, namely immediate benefit and penetrating insight, you see the world through inward sight. Nothing in the world can prick you through your sense organs. Nothing can lead your eyes, ears, nose, tongue, or body into temptation. Your mind is free from all kinds of temptations and attachments. All worldly objects and allurements appear to be humorous. You can laugh them off. You feel as if the world as a whole is reduced to a mere handful and is completely in your grip, for it cannot delude your mind while you see it inwardly, in its real nature. If you can establish your mind in this state and do not lose your inward sight, no matter in what posture or place you may be, it must be regarded as a very great attainment of stability. But as you are not yet very skillful, for your introversion and intuition are newly grown and undeveloped, they may easily fade away. So you must guard it with all your efforts. As the Scriptures say: “Just as a chief queen takes care of the child in her womb who will one day be a Wheel-Turning Monarch [an emperor of the world who rules by righteousness] lest she should have a

miscarriage, so one should diligently guard one's newly grown insight until it is stable." For its sake, you should willingly give up income and rights in much the same way as you would be ready to sacrifice everything upon contracting a fatal disease. To this end, you must live in an environment that is suitable for meditation and avoid disagreeable persons and places as a sick person avoids taking things that disagree with him.

Now you should also know that the practice of regulating the mind in this manner does not make you abnormal or disagreeable to society. It does not make you walk, stand, or sleep in unusual or strange ways. Also, you are not supposed to sit meditating all the time or everywhere you go, for after you have gained mastery over meditation, the taste of it becomes one with your mind. Even after you have successfully practiced meditation for the first time, your mind will bathe in the pleasing taste of it for a considerable time until, for want of heedfulness on your part, it fades away.

When the mind is endowed with the fruits of meditation, defilements such as passion, delusion, anger, hatred, and jealousy can hardly pollute it. If you are a politician you can debate carefully, patiently, and convincingly. If you are a missionary you can laugh off the opposition and mockery of nonbelievers. Whatever your occupation or profession, you are self-reliant and do your work successfully. You may go to any place or associate with anybody, and you will be able to maintain mindfully the state of equilibrium that has now become normal for you. All that has been said will suffice to show how the mind well-trained through the practice of meditation is useful from the material,

as well as the spiritual, perspective.

So to conclude this brief account of meditation, mental control results in happiness and immediate benefit (*ditṭhadhammikatta*) and allows one to realize still higher states. To see things in their real nature, to attain Buddha-Dhamma, calls for singleness of mind. The stronger the singleness of mind you have, the easier and more rapidly you can attain Buddha-Dhamma. If you fail to realize the Dhamma now, you will manage to realize it before long if you make it your way of living and are determined to practice it all years and months until the end of your days.

Please take into consideration another important way of realizing Buddha-Dhamma. That is to serve others. This means to render help to others by teaching or showing the way to Buddha-Dhamma itself. When you have trained your mind to the extent that you can keep a check on your destructive emotions, you are able to teach or guide others in proportion to the understanding that you have derived from the experience. The Buddha disapproved of teaching what one cannot put into practice oneself. Conversely, he encouraged the teaching of that which one can really practice. The Buddha himself served humanity in this way. Teaching others is beneficial, for one teaches oneself at the same time. It is also beneficial for the cultivation of benevolence, or friendly feeling, and for the development of the intellect. Furthermore, one should know that this is the line of conduct that the Buddha set forth as an ideal. Therefore, I exhort you, out of your compassion, to help others towards their emancipation. You can do this by guiding them to the extent that you have emancipated yourself. The friendly feeling that you cultivate through

guiding others is very beneficial for the concentration and culture of mind. This is so because when you are cross-questioned you have to investigate and think over the issue carefully and deeply. You have to understand the matter thoroughly before you can reply. In this way, by helping others you help to elevate yourself.

We find in the *Vimuttāyatana Sutta* that some people realized the *summum bonum* while trying to explain it to others. This is because some individuals have the peculiar mental disposition that allows them to think better, more easily, and with delight when they teach or advise others. For such people, new ideas flash into the mind and phrases leap to the mouth spontaneously and they, out of their deep understanding, feel very much exhilarated. Clearly, to try to think of how to guide others, when asked, is not only to enlighten others but to enlighten oneself at the same time. Thus it is something desirable and to be practiced. Please be clear that serving others constitutes a salient feature of, and is very beneficial for, the realization of Buddha-Dhamma.

In conclusion, may I repeat that the way to realize Buddha-Dhamma is to harbor no feeling of attachment to anything, no matter whether sense-objects, views, or one's own assumed 'self.' All troubles arise from attachment, which has ignorance as its mother. The feeling of attachment is an instinct common to all creatures who can think, and the more one thinks the stronger the attachment will be. The power of thinking makes one able to enjoy the different tastes of sense objects more and more. And the more one clings to the tastes, the stronger the bonds of attachment become.

This means that human beings should use our faculty of thinking for higher values; that is, we should try

to be free from self-deception regarding the products of our brains. Let the product of your mind be your servant rather than your master. Let it be helpful rather than destructive to your well-being. It should not delude you. Human beings ought to do better than animals by using our power of thinking in a proper and constructive way. Our knowledge should not bring about our own ruin. We should possess decisive knowledge with regard to good and bad, right and wrong.

To do away with attachment is to gain the wisdom that drives away ignorance. When someone has no attachment or attraction, the very forms, sounds, experiences, and ideas do not delude him, for insight reveals their real nature. One can then handle them in the right way. They can no longer exercise an influence that causes one to react with passion, grievance, and the like. Instead they become helpful and instructive; they promote inner calm and a healthy state of mind and body. The moment you dismiss the feeling of attachment from your mind, you realize the Buddha-Dhamma radiating in you. You discover or rediscover what the Buddha, with great compassion, discovered and taught. Every one of us should realize it, for it marks the ideal of perfection for humankind. This is the end of the holy life. This is the realistic ideal, the aim of life. You must strive for it, for you can raise yourself above the world and worldly phenomena and manage them thereby. You can be free from and above all the problems of life.

Indeed, no problems of life can touch you; you live above all worldly things. There is no state of your being, whether monk or nun, layman or laywoman, male or female, young or old, which can be a hindrance to you.

There is no form, sound, odor, taste, or tangible thing in this world or in any world — truly, there is absolutely nothing whatsoever — that can in the least disturb your majestic quietude. Indeed, the only thing left is an imperturbable and unwavering state where there is no birth, old age, suffering, or death. This reality is the very perfection of the values of life that all who earnestly follow the Buddha, the Enlightened One, the Perfect One, hope for and set their hearts on.

## About the Author

Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu was born in 1906, the son of a southern Thai mother and an ethnic Chinese father. He followed Thai custom by entering a local monastery in 1926, studied for a couple years in Bangkok, and then founded his own refuge for study and practice in 1932. Since then, he has had a profound influence on not only Thai Buddhism but other religions in Siam and Buddhism in the West. Among his more important accomplishments, he:

- Challenged the hegemony of later commentarial texts with the primacy of the Buddha's original discourses.
- Integrated serious Dhamma study, intellectual creativity, and rigorous practice.
- Explained Buddha-Dhamma with an emphasis on this life, including the possibility of experiencing Nibbāna ourselves.
- Softened the dichotomy between householder and monastic practice, stressing that the noble eightfold path is available to everyone.
- Offered doctrinal support for addressing social and environmental issues, helping to foster socially engaged Buddhism in Siam.
- Shaped his forest monastery as an innovative teaching environment and Garden of Liberation.

After a series of illnesses, including strokes, he died in 1993. He was cremated without the usual pomp and expense.

## **Recommended Reading (Books)**

- *Mindfulness With Breathing: A Manual for Serious Beginners*
- *Handbook for Mankind*
- *The First Ten Years of Suan Mokkh*
- *Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree*
- *Keys to Natural Truth*
- *It All Depends* (forthcoming)

## **Online Resources**

- [www.suanmokkh.org](http://www.suanmokkh.org)
- [www.liberationpark.org](http://www.liberationpark.org)
- [www.bia.or.th](http://www.bia.or.th)

## Buddhadāsa Foundation

Established in 1994, the Buddhadāsa Foundation aims to promote the study and practice of Buddha-Dhamma according to Ven. Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu’s teachings. It encourages compilation and translation of his works from Thai into foreign languages, as well as supports publication of translated teachings for free distribution.



## Liberation Park

Liberation Park is a Dhamma refuge in the USA’s Midwest inspired by Suan Mokkh. Here, Santikaro and friends work to nurture a garden of liberation along the lines taught by Ajahn Buddhadāsa, where followers of the Buddha-Dhamma Way can explore Dhamma as Nature and in the Pāli suttas.



## Buddhadāsa Indapañño Archives

Established in 2010, the Buddhadāsa Indapañño Archives collect, maintain, and present the original works of Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu. Also known as Suan Mokkh Bangkok, it is an innovative place for fostering mutual understanding between traditions, studying and practicing Dhamma.

