

A Study on the Contemplation of Feeling (*Vedanānupassanā*) as a Method of Anger Management

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This research study examines the contemplation of feelings (*vedanānupassanā*) in Pāli texts as a method of anger management. Contemplation of feeling is a recurring theme in meditation found in the Pāli texts that can be used to manage all forms of unwholesome states of mind. The study conducted in this paper is based mainly upon the framework provided in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, primarily of two noteworthy guidelines concerning the contemplation of feeling. First, the Sutta expounds that contemplation of feeling consists of cultivating mindfulness by making pleasant (*sukhā*), unpleasant (*dukkhā*), and neither pleasant nor unpleasant [neutral] (*adukkhamasukhā*) feelings as the object of meditation. Amongst these three types of primary feelings which should be mindfully comprehended, particularly the understanding of painful feeling (*dukkhā vedanā*) is explicitly depicted as a way to dispel anger. The Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta itself also explicates that abandoning anger is one of the objectives of cultivating mindfulness. Anger is usually an unwholesome reaction that rejects painful feeling. Thus, the mindfulness of unpleasant feeling is particularly helpful. The pleasant as well as neutral feeling too have painful dimensions embedded in them, making them probable causes of anger. Thus, the contemplation of feeling as a whole is helpful in managing anger. The second guideline in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta stipulates that one has to comprehend the context in which the three feelings arise. This is indicated by differentiating feelings on the basis of ‘material’ (*sāmisa*) and ‘non-material’ (*nirāmisa*). Thus, this study concludes that this distinction is very essential, for only the material kinds of feelings tend to reinforce latent tendencies to anger, while the non-material forms of feelings weaken and eradicate the latent tendencies towards anger.

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