

The Beauty Of the **SILENT** Mind



Upul Nishantha Gamage

When unhappiness starts acting on the stage known as 'life', the physical world becomes desolate and the deep need for meditation arises within us. We first need to meditate on the agitation of our mind. Be mindful and recognize the feelings as they arise one at a time. As a result, we can experience a peaceful mind free from all conflict and emotion. Though the mind is peaceful, as it continuously talks about the physical world, we need to meditate on the talkative mind. When we know that the mind is talking, its talking will stop. In the absence of the talkative mind, we can experience an absolutely wonderful silence.

Only the silent mind hears the truth. The silent mind gives no value to the physical world. We can acquire the ability to look at the world without clinging and aversion, and be fully liberated from everything. Meditation carries us step by step on a journey towards a place where the spiritual world is free from the physical world.



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Light of Nilambe

Dhamma Dāna

In memory of

our beloved parents and grandparents

May this merit be conducive for them
to attain Nibbāna!

with Love and Gratitude

Palitha, Harshana and Dharshana

The Beauty of the Silent Mind

Talk given by

Upul Nishantha Gamage

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1. The physical world

Dear Dhamma Friends, you have meditated for a considerable length of time on this full-moon day, maybe from dawn until now. You may have experienced some results of meditation such as the calm mind and the relaxed body. You may have some perception of and faith in the results and merits of meditation. Otherwise, I don't think anybody would make the sacrifice of coming all the way up to this hilltop with some difficulty, in order to experience physical and mental ease. What is the need of meditation? Why do we need meditation?

Physical forms exist everywhere. Our eyes see countable and countless numbers of forms or physical things. Therefore, we can say that this world is a physical world. We see trees, hills, rivers, the sea, the sky, the stars, the planets, clouds, rain, fruits, vegetables, the earth, and animals. **Everything we see is physical. We cannot see anything that is not physical. Everything in the external world is physical.** Everything we see

with our eyes or microscopes or telescopes is physical. Our body is also physical. Everything associated with the body, from the head to the toenails, is physical. All the parts of the body have a weight, a colour and a shape. There are some other physical features such as body odour and body temperature. Not only the external parts but also the internal parts of the body are physical. All the internal organs have a colour, a shape and a function. **Nothing non-physical can be found by dissecting the body from the head to the sole.**

All the physical things are made of liquids, solids, gases and heat, which are known as the four great elements (*Mahā-bhūta*). Or else, we can say that the four great elements make up all the physical things. **All the external and internal things associated with the body are made of a combination of the four great elements.** We live in a physical world which consists of physical things made of the four great elements. Even if you analyse a tree down to its last cell, you do not find anything that is not made of the four great elements. If you dig a hill and

analyse down to its last sand particle, everything you find is physical. It is the same if you empty the great ocean or explore the whole universe.

2. Is only the physical world enough for life?

Therefore, a person can say that life and the world are physical, and there is nothing else beyond that. Moreover, they can say that everything else or the existence of non-physical things is nonsense. Such views and philosophies have always existed in the world. Therefore, there is no point in scolding such views and philosophies. Such views seem true as nothing other than the physical life and the physical world can be seen. If suffering does not exist, there is no problem with such views and philosophies. If a person does not experience any suffering or sorrow or distress or unhappiness, there is no problem with the views associated with the existence of a merely/purely physical world.

As long as there is no suffering, our only refuge is the physical world consisting of money, friends, food, medicine and social positions. *Dear Dhamma Friends*, **the physical world is more than enough for life as long as we do not experience any suffering or sorrow or distress or unhappiness.** The breath is more than enough. Food and drink is more than enough. Moreover, nice clothes, vehicles, money, houses, friends, social status and positions are more than enough for life. If someone does not experience any suffering from birth until death, physical things are more than enough for such a person.

However, it is impossible to live such a life. Such characters do not exist even in the silliest novel or the most meaningless teledrama or movie. Suffering enters from somewhere, piercing through these physical walls and bases, and talks to a person. This can happen to anybody regardless of differences, boundaries and restrictions such as being small or big, young or old, male or female, rich or poor. Suffering and unhappiness come piercing through all these physical name-boards and

labels, and tap on us. We have no idea from where unhappiness comes, maybe from outside, maybe from inside. **Unhappiness starts acting on the stage known as 'life' or 'I' or 'you'**. Then, see what happens to the physical story. The physical world is helpless in the face of suffering. In the absence of suffering, the physical world somersaults saying that it is the only hero. Money reigns better than even a god at a place where there is pleasure. Health and your supporters are noticeable when there is pleasure. Moreover, a person can spread his/her supremacy and show his/her heroic abilities when there is pleasure. Positions, awards, honour and respect from society are noticeable as long as happiness and pleasure exist.

3. Desolate physical world

However, *Dear Dhamma Friends*, all these **physical things disappear when unhappiness, sorrow and distress enter the house called 'you' or 'I'**. The value of physical things vanishes. **Physical things such as money exist but are no longer useful,**

because money cannot buy happiness. Money cannot buy the happiness you had before. Even if you have money, if you cannot buy happiness with that money, such money is no longer useful. **All physical things are desolate in front of unhappiness, sorrow and distress.**

We all wish for a life free from unhappiness, sorrow and distress. While wishing this for ourselves, we also wish that others may live long, happily, healthily and peacefully. It is a very good wish. Wishing like that is a merit. Such a thought is a merit. However, this thought cannot lock the entrance and prevent suffering from entering. That is the truth. **Suffering has got the key to open any lock, no matter what kind of lock is used.** Therefore, unhappiness comes every now and then, whether we like it or not. We have no idea when unhappiness is going to enter, because it does not follow a timetable. We cannot prepare a timetable for it. We prepare timetables for everything: the bus, the train, the airplane, a school, a meditation centre, an office, a university, the rainy season, the

dry season, the windy season, the drought season, the sun and the moon. Even if our timetables work 100% well and suit the physical world, **unhappiness does not arise according to any timetable.**

Therefore, we can talk only about the past. We talk mostly about our past. Especially the elderly, who think that they have lived more than half of their life, talk mostly about their past. What do we talk about? Just see clearly. We talk about the happy times we had. We talk about the times when we faced a lot of problems and difficulties. We talk about the times associated with the past: the times we were happy, the times we were unhappy, the times we cried, the times we laughed. Only the past is true. **We can trust only the past because the past incidents have already taken place, and we cannot change them.** Therefore, a person can talk about the past beyond any doubt. A person can talk about yesterday beyond any doubt: what happened yesterday and what did not happen yesterday.

However, we cannot talk about the future beyond any doubt. Therefore, we don't know whether suffering will arise in the morning or afternoon or evening. Moreover, we don't know whether unhappiness will appear at night or whether it will arise in a dream. We cannot guess. We cannot command it. Even if we try to command it, **sorrow reaches us despite our commands in an unexpected way.** Sorrow makes us feel sad. We cannot deny that. Even if we wholeheartedly wish for a life without any sorrow, we may become a person who feels sad, weeps, cries and sighs. This can happen at any time, at any age and in any place: in the kitchen, in the lounge, in the bathroom, in the courtyard, at the gate, on the road, in a bank, in a temple, in a meditation centre, in the office and so on. There are no boundaries for such experiences. Feelings have the ability to make us sigh. Therefore, the physical world may become desolate at any moment. **When a person is unhappy, the physical world may become desolate like a counterfeit coin and may disappear like the morning dew, a dream or a mirage.**

4. The non-physical world

At that point, the need for meditation arises. Otherwise, a person may not feel the real need for mediation, because their physical resources are quite sufficient to live a happy and relaxed life until death. However, when things don't happen the way we expect, the need for some non-physical method and process arises deeply in us. The terms like 'mind and mental' are simpler than the term 'non-physical'. Meditation is a mental process. **There isn't a thing called the mind, but a mental process or a non-physical action or an exercise exists.** 'Mental exercise' is a simpler term than 'non-physical process.' However, when the term 'mental exercise' is used, someone may think that there is something called the mind somewhere. Moreover, someone may argue over where the mind is. Such thoughts may create an additional suffering on the top of the existing suffering. Meditation is a mental process. It is not a physical process like eating, brushing your teeth/hair, walking, jumping and so on.

So, what is meditation? We need to find out what meditation is. Meditation is necessary because suffering exists. A person may suffer outwardly or inwardly. A person may suffer silently or while crying and weeping. A person may suffer knowing that s/he suffers. A person may suffer in deceit thinking that s/he is experiencing pleasure. A person suffers in all these ways. For instance, a person can eat something bitter thinking that it is sweet. Or, a person can eat something bitter knowing that it is bitter. Whatever the case, s/he eats the bitterness.

5. Happening vs performing

Meditation is an action. It is something we perform, not something that just happens. Two types of action exist in the world. One action just happens and the other is performed. **No person or subject is involved in actions that just happen.** For instance, raining is an action that happens. There is nobody who does that. Only an action exists. Similarly, blood circulation is an action that happens in the absence of a doer. There is

nobody who sends oxygenated blood to the heart and deoxygenated blood from the heart to the organs. However, blood circulation takes place. Breathing is an action, which happens even when we are asleep. Even if we are unconscious, breathing happens. A doer is not necessary for blood circulation and breathing. There are actions that require a doer: eating food, mixing food, putting food close to the mouth, munching food, tasting food, swallowing food. Afterwards, the digestion of the food is an action that happens without a doer. As mentioned earlier, actions are of two kinds: those that happen and those that are performed. **Suffering and unhappiness are actions that happen.** Nobody does something to try to be unhappy. Suffering and unhappiness are involuntary actions with some outcomes such as becoming angry and fearful.

Meditation refers to seeing, recognizing and understanding the actions that make us unhappy and restless. Therefore, we ought to meditate intentionally. Though the breath comes and goes involuntarily, meditation does not happen in that manner. We

hear sounds involuntarily. Hearing is an action. If our ears are healthy and if we are awake, we hear. Hearing is an action. But **meditation does not happen involuntarily. We ought to do it intentionally, attentively and mindfully.**

6. Seeing the non-physical suffering

What do I need to do mindfully? What do I need to do intentionally? **We need to see the non-physical suffering.** Suffering is non-physical. We cannot talk about the length, the width, the height, the weight and the colour of suffering. However, we cannot deny suffering. Suffering exists. Someone can ask about the size of suffering. It is impossible to talk about any measurement associated with suffering. Often we refer to great suffering. Though the adjective 'great' is used with suffering, it is not measurable using physical measures. The words such as 'great' or 'big' are physical words. Such words are used to refer to physical things. However, though we use such

physical words to describe suffering, it is something non-physical.

Dear Dhamma Friends, the first function of meditation is to see suffering. Suffering does not exist inside our eyes, or head, or hands, or legs. It does not exist inside our house or furniture. **We don't know where suffering exists. Even though we cannot show where suffering is, we all experience it.** Suffering is something non-physical so it is not possible to show where it is. We can refer to places associated only with physical things. The non-physical suffering is not associated with any location, quantity, shape and colour. Be conscious of suffering. We may have been experiencing suffering throughout saṃsāra without our knowledge. You need to be conscious of the suffering you have been experiencing unknowingly. **There is nothing else to do. Just know that you are experiencing suffering.**

Look at the suffering, agitation, impatience, anger and jealousy. All these feelings don't have any pleasure in them.

They have no coolness. Instead, they burn us. **Look at these feelings.** As looking is an action performed by eyes, we think that we will get to see something that exists somewhere. No, **these feelings do not exist somewhere. We cannot see them either. Just know or perceive these feelings.** Perceiving is also not a physical action. But we have to use physical words to talk about these non-physical feelings. We use language to talk about physical things. Therefore, language can refer only to physical things, nothing else. Language consists of some symbols made of some sounds given by human beings to express their needs and for the world they experience. These symbols may comprise forms too. The symbols of sounds are used in the spoken language and the symbols of forms are used in the written language. We use the same language to talk about physical things as well as about our experience, because there is no other medium of communication. There is nothing called ‘spiritual language.’ Nor is it possible to create such a language.

Anyway Dear Dhamma Friends, when we look, we see suffering. We feel agitation or violence within us. Our inner self feels the external violence. Someone may ask: “Where is our ‘inner self’ located? Is our inner self located inside the stomach, or the heart, or the kidneys, or the medulla oblongata?” It is not possible to answer. The term ‘inner self’ refers to something non-physical. You need to recognize the limits of these words. Don’t be deceived by these words. Don’t stop the journey because you are deceived by these words, holding onto them and circling around them.

*Dear Dhamma Friends, when we look at our mind, what we see is a big agitation. We feel emotions as our mind. We feel happiness. We may feel overwhelming happiness. Happiness is not something that our hands or nose feel. Therefore, we say that the happiness is in our mind. **The ‘mind’ is merely a word because we don’t have anything to show as our mind.*** As we have to say where our happiness is, we say that it is in our mind or heart. The heart we refer to is not the physical heart. If we

think that our happiness is in our physical heart, then another question arises. Where exactly in the physical heart does our happiness exist? In which atrium or ventricle does our happiness exist? Because such questions are possible, we have to use a word to indicate where our happiness is. Therefore, we are compelled to say where our happiness exists. The mind is a big agitation. A person first sees an agitated mind or a mind full of emotions in meditation. We always see agitation or emotions in our mind.

7. The present reality

We see emotions like anger, insolence or pride, which are known as 'defilements' in the Dhamma. **We first see the defilements. We see the defilements as our mind.** We see emotions, agitation, and conflicts as feelings in our mind. We do not see any other kind of mind. In other words, we do not get to know any other mind. **We first need to meditate on the agitation of our mind, because that is the present reality, the**

present truth. If you have anger in your mind, the present non-physical truth about you is the anger. No other truth exists. What you need to know is the anger. If you feel shame, the present non-physical reality about you is the shame. You need to know about the shame. **You need to know about what you feel.** Maybe you feel sad. Then you need to know about the sadness.

8. The first step

Dear Dhamma Friends, be mindful about all the feelings you experience. You need to know all your feelings. When you feel shame, know that you feel shame. When you have an inferiority complex, just know about it. These feelings do not arise all at once. Just recognize the feelings as they arise, one at a time. There is no other mind that you can see. If the mind is a book, its cover is defilements, which are feelings, emotions. **The first entrance, or the first story, or the first step is seeing the defilements. Without getting onto the first step, you cannot**

jump over a couple of steps. Because the first step is a difficult one, avoiding it and starting from the second step is not possible.

Dear Dhamma Friends, whenever you are oppressed by any defilement, you need to meditate at that point itself. Sometimes, you may not need to meditate much when you are at a meditation centre. You need to meditate more when you are on the road, at home or in the kitchen. Such meditation is more important for us than the meditation happening at a meditation centre as a habit, in a group and according to a timetable. During meditation, a person first sees the non-physical world as nothing more than a huge suffering.

9. No winners but losers

Moreover, the non-physical world is full of agitation. There is quarrelling and fighting in it. There is a big competition in it. Competitions and conflicts in the outside world are something trivial compared to those within us. The real fight exists in the

non-physical world. The fight in the physical world is trivial. The fight in the non-physical world is very complex. We have no idea why such fights go on. No idea about who fights with whom. Even those who fight do not know. The fight within us goes on in deep ignorance. When does this happen? We do not know. However, the fight goes on all the time: the present fights with our past and future. The fight within us goes on in ignorance against ourselves. Therefore, there is no winner, unlike in the fights in the physical world. **There are only losers in the fights in the non-physical world.**

Who can fight with one's own self and win? Can the left hand fight with the right hand and win? Is the right hand or the left hand going to win? Both the right and the left hands hurt each other. **There are no persons here. In the end, you hurt yourself. It is not your left hand or right hand, but you who suffer, you who is oppressed.**

10. Internal and external conflicts

See this non-physical fight or mental conflict. Let alone the word 'suffering,' see the mental conflict. We clash with what we hear, what we see. We hear something physical. We see something physical. **We clash mentally over physical hearing and physical sight.** Remembering is physical. We clash with things we remember. We start fighting with the things we remember. We fight with hunger and thirst. We fight with the food we eat. There is no peace. We think that our hunger is the suffering. We clash with hunger thinking that it would be nice to have some food. Then we get some food to eat and clash with it. We chose food. We decide what to eat. We compare the food with our past experience. How is the food cooked? Which method of cooking should be used? Therefore, peace does not exist anywhere. If a person says that s/he experiences peace within, that is a wonder, a miracle.

Dear Dhamma Friends, see the internal and external fights that are happening within you in the present. The external fights are associated with the physical world: the world we see, the world we hear, the world we remember, the world we taste, the world we touch or feel as cold and hot, and the world we smell. Good smell is physical. Sweet taste is physical. Red colour is physical. The songs of the birds are physical. The mental or the non-physical world that has no colour, shape, taste, odour and weight creates conflicts to do with the physical world that we see and hear, and has weight, length, width, height, colour, shape, taste, nutrients and odour. **Someone may think that the mental world will lose the battle, because the physical world is strong.** It is not important whether the mental world or the physical world is going to win. **It is the oppression of the mental world that matters.** The sounds we hear do not suffer. The physical forms we see do not suffer. But the mind that clashes with the forms suffers. **It is the mind that clashes. The forms we see do not fight with the mind. The physical world has never started any fight with the mental world. The first bullet**

is always shot by the mind. The physical world is very innocent. The physical world is non-violent compared to the violent mind. No form or sound asked the mind to fight, to scold or to clash with it. Fighting or scolding or clashing with something or someone is an action which is happening or has already happened. **However, the mental process holds onto the physical actions and creates at least a very small conflict. This conflict is referred to as 'contact' (*phassa*) in the Dhamma.** The beginning of the mental process is clashing with the physical actions that have already happened. See this conflict. If you do not see it, imposing rules or asking not to fight or trying to live amicably will not stop the mind having conflicts with the physical world.

11. External and internal conflicts

Dear Dhamma Friends, see this conflict in the mind. See where conflicts arise. Nobody can completely solve this problem without seeing and knowing the conflict. There is no-one who

has done so, without first seeing and knowing the conflict. Therefore, **first know and see the conflict.** Meditate on the inner agitation over and over. Meditate whenever your mind is agitated. Do not miss any moment. Do not ignore any moment thinking that it is alright for the mind to get agitated at a certain time, at a certain place and on a certain occasion. Moreover, do not think: “I will be careful only if my mind gets agitated while I am meditating.” Do not make such a choice. **Wherever you are, whatever you are doing, whichever posture you are in, be wary of the agitation in your mind at each moment.** Do not ignore even a small conflict. Just see the conflict. There is nothing else to see. We create conflicts thinking about good and bad, beauty and ugliness, luck and misfortune. **The moment two opposite thoughts arise in our mind, the conflict arises.** A conflict always needs two parties: past and future, present and future, me and others, my childhood and youth. In this manner, a conflict arises as soon as we create two parties. There is no peace.

When a person meditates upon this continuously, then s/he may experience an inner self free from any conflict. The agitated mind does not exist anymore. We need to see the agitation. See it all the time, whenever the mind gets agitated by desire, lust, fear etc. See the agitation. Don't ignore it. Be mindful of it. You don't have to do something about it, but be mindful, just be aware of what is happening in your inner self at each moment. This awareness initiates a big transition. This awareness makes us take the first step on a journey that takes us to a place where we'll not experience such suffering anymore. If we do not take this step, we will keep on experiencing the same suffering, the same anger. We have no idea how many times anger has approached us. We have no idea how many times anger will approach us in future. However, this awareness, attentiveness and mindfulness makes us experience such suffering only once. If you get to experience something similar, its intensity will be less next time. You'll become less angry next time. The anger will be less. The suffering will be less. The anger will last for a shorter time. In this manner, when a person is seeing, being

conscious and being aware of this non-physical agitation, non-physical anger and non-physical emotion, s/he gets to know the existence of a non-physical experience without agitation.

12. Peaceful non-physical world

The agitation itself is physical, though it appears to be non-physical in the beginning. However, there are some moments that are very peaceful, very calm and quiet. Mindfulness clearly shows us for the first time that such a non-physical world exists. It is not a fairy tale or mere faith or belief, but an actual experience. Mindfulness gives that experience to us. However, mindfulness does that only to a person who has had the first experience, i.e. knowing and seeing the agitation. Therefore, I said earlier that you cannot avoid the first step and jump onto the second step. **With such an experience, our mind, or inner self, or spiritual world, or non-physical world-no matter which term is used-is peaceful.** There is no agitation, no violence. A person gets to see and know the mind free from agitation and

emotion. Is the meditation over at that point? We needed meditation because of our agitation. Now, there is no agitation, no anger, and no sorrow. We feel good. No, we still need meditation because we have not yet reached the destination of the journey, not yet reached the end. Therefore, if you are calm, meditate on the calmness. If you are not angry, be aware again that you are not angry. There is no suffering now. Be mindful that there is no suffering.

13. The talkative mind

I'll talk about this aspect of the mind by referring to different layers, though such layers do not exist in reality. **The first layer refers to seeing and knowing the emotion. The second layer refers to seeing and knowing the absence of emotion.** Though there is no emotion, the mind talks. The mind talks about the physical world: what is heard, what is seen. The mind now fights with what you see and hear. And if there is no fight, the mind starts talking about what it has seen and heard. Ideas are

expressed. Look at this talkative mind. Isn't there a talkative mind? We do not see it when it is agitated. An agitated mind does not talk. Only a mechanical action exists. Just see how you behave when you are angry. There is no time to think. The action-beating or scolding someone-has already taken place. There is no time to think when you are angry. You can think only when there is no emotion. **The moment when the emotion is silent, we can see the thinking mind or the talkative mind. The mind talks about the present and the past. The mind does not talk emotionally as it is not agitated.** The mind expresses its ideas about the future, and about others, etc.

A person expresses only about 1% of what the mind says. Nobody, not even a lunatic expresses 100%. If a person expresses more than 25%, we usually call him/her a lunatic. There is nothing louder than the talkative mind, not even the noisy loudspeakers. You need to feel the talkative mind. Nothing in the physical world is as talkative as the non-physical world. **Only a meditator hears the talkative mind.** Someone may go

mad because of the talkative mind, whether s/he hears it or not. Someone can make others go mad too. During meditation, listen to the talking in the mind, listen to the stories being created by the mind as if you are braiding a necklace using a single bead at a time. The mind takes portions from the past, from the present, from the children and from the parents, and creates a story. Recognize the mind that creates stories.

Having meditated first on the agitation and emotion in our mind, secondly we need to meditate on the mind that continuously makes up stories about everything and everybody. There is no obvious conflict in the mind now. But the mind is busy. The mind has no rest. Suppose a person talks continuously. As a result, s/he gets tired. Similarly, a talkative mind gets tired. The mind talks about six topics. We all are aware of the six topics. The mind does not have a seventh topic. The seventh topic does not exist. If you ponder on what the mind is talking about at any moment, you can see the six

topics: things seen, heard, smelled, tasted, contacted/touched and remembered. That is all.

14. No real freedom of thinking

Can the mind think about something else? The mind is stuck inside these six topics. No free thinking exists here. We have been thinking about these six topics from birth until now, not about anything else. We often talk about freedom of thinking. Although we say that we can think about what we want and nobody can stop us from thinking, we are stuck inside a small world. **There are only six topics for us to think about.** We just keep on thinking about one of the six topics. We do not put full stops. We do not close the book. Suppose a new topic arises or we hear something new or we remember something new. Then, the topic changes, and the mind starts talking about the new topic.

These are instantaneous talks. There is nobody better than the mind for giving instantaneous talks. There are people who are

reluctant to talk in front of others. Some people have stage fright. However, everybody's mind is a clever speaker, because it always talks. The mind can talk about anything under the six headings. There is nothing that the mind cannot talk about. If there is nothing to talk about, then the mind starts talking about its inability to talk about something. See the talkative mind. See the mind that talks endlessly. **Although the mind is calm, it talks unnecessarily. It is vociferous.**

15. Useless talking in the mind

What is the purpose of such talking? What is the point of such thinking? Is such thinking necessary? **In the absence of wisdom and understanding, the mind talks like a crazy person.** We see this talkative mind during meditation. What is the mind talking about now? Maybe about some sound you heard while ago, maybe about some incident you just remembered. Recognize it. **Always see the topic. You need to know not only the talkative mind, but also the topic that it is talking about. When you are**

aware of the topic in the talkative mind, then mindfulness makes you understand what a useless act the talking is. What is the point of talking and shouting about such things? What is the benefit?

To whom is the mind talking? This is the most important question. There should be a listener. To whom is the mind talking? There is no listener. The mind talks alone, which is a characteristic of craziness. Usually **talking alone or talking to one's own self is considered a characteristic of craziness. Talking is not an attribute of a healthy mind.** It shows that problem exists. The non-physical world is afflicted with an illness. An unhealthy non-physical world exists. The physical world may be healthy. The physical body can be healthy for some time. However, **it is impossible to say that the non-physical world is healthy even for a moment, because it talks unnecessarily.** There is nobody to listen to it. It talks alone.

16. How to stop the talkative mind?

Therefore, **see the talkative mind. As a result, the mind stops.** If you do not see the talkative mind, it talks endlessly while changing the topic all the time. See the talkative mind. Be aware of the talkative mind. As soon as you know it, the talking in the mind stops. Knowing and talking or thinking do not go together. Knowing is one thing and thinking is something else. **The moment you are aware that the mind is talking, it is going to stop talking.** The mind becomes quiet. The talking is over. **If you are mindful, your mind puts a full stop to its talking in front of you for the first time.** Otherwise, there are no full stops, only commas. The commas continue. **For the first time, a person feels and understands that the mind is going to stop talking.** This is not about changing the topic under discussion. The mind stops talking. No matter what the topic is, the mind stops talking, if you are mindful.

17. The undisturbed silence

The moment the mind stops talking, you can be aware of what is happening: the breath entering and leaving; hearing; experiencing the aches, if the body aches. The awareness exists, but the talking does not. **Now, a silent inner world exists. A person can experience a silent non-physical world.** This experience is the third layer. The first layer is the awareness of having agitation and emotions in the mind, and the second layer is the awareness of the absence of agitation and emotions in the mind.

In the absence of agitation and emotions, the talkative mind can be seen. **When we pay attention to the talkative mind, it stops making up stories, causing us to experience a silent mind, which is the third layer.** I stated earlier that the physical world is not as talkative as the mental world. **In the absence of the talkative mind, we can experience an absolutely wonderful silence.** A person can experience a **silence non-physically,**

which cannot be disturbed by any noise in the physical world. Such a person can remain in silence. **No matter how noisy the physical world is or even if someone is scolding or praising you, a silent mind can remain in silence, though it hears the external sounds.** A silent mind cannot be agitated. There is no inner agitation in the form of desire for beautiful things or aversion towards ugly things. **A silent mind does not create stories or becomes talkative.** An inner silence exists. **Meditation offers us a non-physical silence that cannot be broken by anybody or any external physical sound.**

This kind of silence is exquisite. Therefore, someone may incline to meditation more and more. It is not a problem. However, **this inner silence is not the ultimate goal or destination of meditation.** It is something necessary for meditation. It is a road kit necessary for the journey of meditation. Therefore, do not stop meditating after acquiring the inner silence.

18. One and only qualification to see the truth

Only a non-talkative mind or a silent mind starts hearing the truth. If we are not silent, we do not hear the truth. As soon as our ears hear some sounds, our mind starts talking about them. As a result, our ears do not hear the external sounds anymore, but only what our mind says. So **the ears hear some sounds coloured by what the mind says.** It is the same with what the eyes see. See clearly what the eyes see. The eyes do not see the truth. Though the eyes can see the truth, the mind does not let us see it. Suppose the eyes take half a second to see a figure. Instantly, the mind gets agitated and starts distorting the figure using the past knowledge and future expectations associated with it. **One person makes the figure beautiful and another person makes it ugly. Whether the figure is made beautiful or ugly, it is distorted. Clinging and aversion distort it.** It is not possible to see the truth. **Clinging and aversion do not let our eyes see the truth.** Because of the mind and its stories and emotions, we do not get to experience even the physical truth.

When the emotions diminish and the mind becomes silent, then we qualify to see the reality, to see the truth.

19. One and only reason for suffering

What is the truth? We have given value to certain things. We think that they are so valuable. Our mind says that living is pointless and impossible without them. In this manner, the mind has given values to the world, to the physical world. Who has given values to the physical world? It is the mind or the non-physical world. This is the biggest joke because none of the physical things value themselves. Who values them? It is the non-physical mind. It says that living is impossible without certain physical things. Moreover, certain things are so valuable and certain other things are not. It is a nuisance. Then we start realizing that there is no real truth associated with such thoughts about valuable and worthless things. **We are trapped in this untruth and suffer all the time in life. There is no other reason for our suffering, but giving values to the physical**

world and the experiences of the senses: positive and negative values such as good and bad, beautiful and ugly etc.

In the absence of agitation in the mind, we do not give emotional values to anything in agitation. Nor do we give values based on our preconceived ideas and views. When we do not give values based on views and projections of the mind, nor on views and ideas projected in agitation as defilements, we get to see what the world has really got. Until then, we cannot see the truth. We see the things painted by us in different colours, not the truth. We need to remove the mask. **The mask is removed in the presence of the silent mind. The silent mind does not try to wear any mask, neither a beautiful nor an ugly mask.** If a person does not give any value to the physical world, s/he will be free from clinging and aversion. Until then, we are caught up in each sand particle of the physical world. We are caught up in each rupee and cent and each thread, giving value to them as good and bad.

20. Gold or dust

Gold is a measure for someone's wealth, not only personal wealth but also the wealth of a bank or even a country. The reserve of gold is the measure of wealth today and it was also so in the past. A wealthy baron possessed lots of gold in his treasury. Nobody had such an amount of gold. Wherever there was gold he would get some of it. As an ordinary person, this wealthy baron was so proud about his wealth of gold. Others in the country also praised him. Possessing such an amount of gold by a single person is a record, probably a world record. The story unfolds.

One day he found that all his gold had been turned into dust. The treasury was filled with dust. All the chests, coffers and safes which had gold in them were filled with dust. We can imagine what a shock he must have had. Just imagine the kind of shock a person would have over the loss of something small. Just imagine what kind of a feeling you would have if you found

that the television you valued so much was missing and saw a blackboard instead. It would be unbearable. This wealthy baron in the story had a mental breakdown.

This is one way of getting mentally ill. If you found out that something you value a lot has turned into something worthless, you would fall mentally ill. The significance or insignificance of something is a relative feeling. According to this wealthy baron, dust was not valuable and gold was valuable. Valuable gold turned into worthless dust. Therefore, he fell mentally ill. Crazily, he started running. Then he met a hermit. He knew the hermit. Crazily, he said to the hermit: "Nobody had gold like me. However, all my gold has turned into dust. I cannot bear it. I cannot tolerate it." He requested the hermit to help him get his gold back, but not to end suffering. Then the hermit said: "I'll tell you a remedy. Load all the gold into carts and bring them to the town." Then the baron said: "There is no gold but only dust." Then the hermit said: "That is alright. Bring the boxes of dust. If someone says that you have gold not dust in your boxes,

and then bring that person to me.” Then the baron said: “Will that solve my problem?” The hermit said: “Yes, definitely. You’ll get more gold than you had before.”

There was no other solution. Who could solve this problem? The hermit left. The wealthy baron brought all the boxes to the town. The passers-by asked: “What has happened to this person? Why has he brought boxes of dust to the town? He has got lots of gold. Instead of bringing the gold, he has brought dust.” Nobody knew what had happened to the baron. Nobody said that he had gold in the boxes. He waited till evening. Then a person said: “You have got lots of gold. The carts are filled with gold.” As soon as the baron heard that statement, he was so happy and hugged that person. Then that person asked: “Why are you so happy?” Then the baron said: “Everybody said that the carts are filled with dust. You are the only person who saw gold in the boxes.” Then that person said: “This is gold. Therefore, I told the truth.” The baron said: “Let’s go to meet the hermit.” The baron took the carts of dust and went to see

the hermit. The baron said to the hermit: “This person is the only person who saw gold in my carts. Please solve my problem.” Then the hermit said: “That person is the only person who can solve your problem. If someone has seen gold in your carts, only that person can solve your problem. Ask him and learn how to see gold in dust.” The baron said: “If I do so, will I get my gold back?” The hermit said: “Yes, you’ll get more gold than this.”

Then the baron went to the person who said that there was gold in his carts and started learning. The baron was taught meditation. **We see the world according to the way we look at it.** If we want to see the word as dust, we see it as dust. If we want to see the word as gold, we see it as gold. We can see gold as something valuable or worthless. We can also see dust as something valuable or worthless. Therefore, **the world is something we see depending on the way we look at it.**

The baron learnt these lessons. He did not learn them with the intention of attaining Nibbāna or liberation but of turning the dust back into gold. However, as a result of meditation and discipline, the baron was able to look at the whole world the way he wanted. If someone wants to see the world as gold, s/he can look at it as gold. As a result, s/he sees the whole world as gold. If someone wants to see the world as useless dust, s/he can look at it as dust. As a result, s/he sees the whole world as dust. Also, there can be a golden value in all dust. Similarly, anything made of gold can be seen as less valuable than mere dust. A person can look at something in both these ways. The baron acquired that ability. As a result of acquiring the ability to look at the world in both these ways, he lost his aversion to dust and clinging to gold, and got fully liberated from everything. **Meditation carries us step by step on a journey towards a place where the spiritual world is free from the physical world.** We need meditation to carry on this journey.

May the Triple Gem Bless You!!!