

The Kāyagatāsati Sutta, “Mindfulness of the Body” (MN 119)

kāya: “body”; *sati*: lit. “memory”, “recollection”, “mindfulness”

Sections identical to the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta (MN 10): breathing, postures, activities, 32 body parts, 4 elements, corpse contemplations. Sections different: 4 jhāna, progress in mindfulness, and 10 benefits of mindfulness.

This sutta emphasizes the meditation process, focusing on absorptions states (*jhāna*) grounded in embodied awareness. The “refrain” after each section emphasizes renunciation/letting go of “household” concerns relating to the past (“memories”) and future (“intentions”):

“As he abides thus diligent, ardent, and resolute, his memories and intentions based on the household life are abandoned; with their abandoning his mind becomes steadied internally, quieted, brought to singleness, and concentrated.”

breathing (*ānāpāna*)

knowing: in + out

knowing: long + short

training: sense breath in whole body

training: calming the body/breath

This is the first 4 of the 16 steps of “Mindfulness of In and Out Breathing” (Ānāpānasati Sutta, MN 118).

4 postures (*iriyāpatha*)

walking

standing

sitting

lying down

full awareness (*sati-sampajañña*)

full awareness / clear comprehension (*sati-sampajañña*) when...

going forward, returning, looking ahead, looking away,
flexing + extending limbs, wearing robe, carrying robe + bowl,
eating, drinking, consuming food, tasting,
defecating + urinating,
walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking,
talking + keeping silent

“foulness” - the body parts (*paṭikkūla-manasikāra*)

head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones,
bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs,
bowel, mesentery, contents of the stomach, feces, bile, phlegm, pus,
blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, spittle, snot, oil of the joints, urine

4 elements (*mahābhūta/catudhātu*)

earth (*pruṭhavi-dhātu*): hard/soft

water (*āpa-dhātu*): wetness/dryness, cohesion

fire (*teja-dhātu*): hot/cold

wind (*vāyu-dhātu*): air, movement

cemetery contemplations (*sīvathikā-manasikāra*)

visualizing a corpse... 1, 2, 3 days dead, bloated, livid, oozing matter
being devoured by crows, hawks, vultures, dogs, jackals, worms
skeleton w/ flesh+blood, held together by sinews
skeleton w/o flesh, smeared w/ blood, held together by sinews
skeleton w/o flesh+blood, held together by sinews
disconnected bones, scattered in all directions
bones bleached white, the color of shells
bones heaped up, more than a year old; bones turned to dust.

4 meditative absorptions (jhāna)

18. 1st jhāna: applied & sustained thought,
with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion.
Simile: soaked ball of bath powder
19. 2nd jhāna: self-confidence & singleness of mind,
with rapture & pleasure born of concentration.
Simile: lake with cool spring & no inflow
20. 3rd jhāna: equanimity, mindful & fully aware,
feeling pleasure with the body.
Simile: lotus flowers immersed in cool water
21. 4th jhāna: neither-pain-nor-pleasure,
& purity of mindfulness due to equanimity.
Simile: body covered head to toe with a white cloth

progress [one's relationship to Māra & ability to attain states]

22. Mindfulness of Body includes all wholesome states there are.
Simile: ocean includes all streams that flow into it
- 23-25. *Similes for when Māra finds opportunity & support:*
- a heavy stone ball thrown into a mound of wet clay
 - a dry, sapless piece of wood, a man tries to light a fire
 - a hollow empty water jug, a man comes to fill it with water
- 26-28. *Similes for when Māra finds no opportunity & support:*
- a light ball of string thrown at a solid heartwood door panel
 - a wet, sappy piece of wood, a man tries to light a fire
 - a full-to-the-brim water jug, a man comes to fill it with water
- 29-31. *Similes for how a person can realize any desired state*
- a full water jug, a man could tip it & water would come out
 - a full pond, water would come out if embankment loosened
 - a harnessed chariot at crossroads, could be driven anywhere

10 benefits of Mindfulness of Body

33-36. *Mundane benefits*

1. One becomes a conqueror of discontent and delight
2. One becomes a conqueror of fear and dread
3. One bears [unpleasant experiences of body & speech]
4. One obtains at will, without trouble or difficulty, the four jhanas

37-39. *Supramundane benefits*

5. One wields the various kinds of supernormal power
6. One hears both kinds of sounds, the divine and the human
7. One understands the minds of other beings

40-42. *The 3 Liberating Insights*

8. One recollects one's manifold past lives

*1st insight Gotama attained under the Bodhi Tree:
the resolution of the past; understanding suffering*

9. One understands how beings pass on according to their actions

*2nd insight Gotama attained under the Bodhi Tree:
the resolution of the future; understanding karma*

10. One enters upon & abides in the deliverance of mind

*3rd & final insight Gotama attained under the Bodhi Tree:
liberation in the present
the abandoning of the defilements / cause of suffering
realization of cessation (nirodha) & unbinding (nibbāna)*