



Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center

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Taints (āśava) and their Removal

Taints (āśava) are the fundamental pollutions or corruptions that darken awareness, trapping beings in transmigration (saṃsāra).

Saṃsāra is the round of rebirths; literally means 'perpetual wandering' between various realms in the cosmos. Beings caught in saṃsāra experience the suffering of repeated birth, old age, sickness, death and rebirth.

The taints have three shades of meaning.

1. Taint as defilement (kilesa) because it flows out, discharges, oozes from the sense faculties: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and the mind.
2. Taint as unwholesome kamma because it has been fermenting for a long time within the stream of consciousness.
3. Taint as suffering (dukkha) because it extends, prolongs and perpetuates the process of suffering.

The destruction of the taints allows beings to escape from saṃsāra and experience nibbāna. Nibbāna is realized by Arahants with "knowing and seeing:" the penetrating insight that arises from meditative concentration (samādhi).

Nibbāna is the destruction of the Three Unwholesome Roots (akusala mūla) or the destruction of the taints (āśava). The Three Unwholesome Roots are fundamental defilements:

1. delusion (moha) = ignorance (avijjā),
2. greed (lobha), and
3. hatred (dosa).

The taints are a category of defilements that exist at the subtle level of mind. The literal translation of the pāli word āśava is "influxes" and has been translated as taints, defilements, corruptions, cankers, intoxicants, pollutants or fermentations. The taints are listed as four and also as three.

The Four Taints (cattāri āśava) are:

1. sense-desire (kā māśava): craving for sensual pleasures; arises by attending to the gratification of sensual pleasures.
2. desire for eternal existence (bhavāśava): desire to be re-born, craving for being, becoming, and existence; arises through attachment to the realms of form and the formless.
3. false or wrong views (diṭṭhāśava), and
4. ignorance (avijjāśava). Ignorance is lack of comprehension of the Four Noble Truths (ariya catusacca). Ignorance is also paying attention to mundane things with The Four Perversions (vipallāsa). The Four Perversions are:
 - i. perceiving the impermanent as permanent,
 - ii. perceiving the painful as pleasurable,
 - iii. perceiving what is not self as self, and
 - iv. perceiving what is foul or impure as beautiful or pure.

The three levels on which these perversions may occur are perception (sañña), thought or cogitation (citta), and views (diṭṭhi). The defilements are responsible for the perversions.

Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

Introduction

The āśavas or taints are a classification of defilements considered in their role of sustaining the saṃsāric round. The commentaries derive the word from a root su meaning "to flow." Scholars differ as to whether the flow implied by the

prefix ā is inward or outward; hence some have rendered it as “influxes” or “influences,” others as “outflows” or “effluents.” A stock passage in the suttas indicates the term’s real significance independently of etymology when it describes the āsavas as states “that defile, bring renewal of being, give trouble, ripen in suffering, and lead to future birth, ageing, and death” (MN 36.47, etc.). Thus other translators, bypassing the literal meaning, have rendered it “cankers,” “corruptions,” or “taints,” the latter being the choice of Ven. Nāṇamoli. The three taints mentioned in the suttas are virtual synonyms for craving for sensual pleasures, craving for being, and the ignorance that appears at the head of the formula for dependent origination. When the disciple’s mind has been liberated from the taints by the completion of the path of arahantship, he reviews his newly won freedom and roars his lion’s roar: “Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more coming to any state of being.”

Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

36 Mahāsaccaka Sutta: The Greater Discourse to Saccaka

47. “Him I call deluded, Aggivessana, who has not abandoned the taints that defile, bring renewal of being, give trouble, ripen in suffering, and lead to future birth, ageing, and death; for it is with the non-abandoning of the taints that one is deluded. Him I call undeluded who has abandoned the taints that defile, bring renewal of being, give trouble, ripen in suffering, and lead to future birth, ageing, and death; for it is with the abandoning of the taints that one is undeluded. The Tathāgata, Aggivessana, has abandoned the taints that defile, bring renewal of being, give trouble, ripen in suffering, and lead to future birth, ageing, and death; he has cut them off at the root, made them like a palm stump, done away with them so that they are no longer subject to future arising. Just as a palm tree whose crown is cut off is incapable of further growth, so too, the Tathāgata has abandoned the taints that defile... done away with them so that they are no longer subject to future arising.”

The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Digha Nikaya translated by Maurice O’C. Walshe

16 Mahāparinibbāna Sutta: The Great Passing

1.12. And then the Lord, while staying at Vultures’ Peak, gave a comprehensive discourse: ‘This is morality, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when imbued with morality, brings great fruit and profit. Wisdom, when imbued with concentration, brings great fruit and profit. The mind imbued with wisdom becomes completely free from the corruptions, that is, from the corruption of sensuality, of becoming, of false views and of ignorance.’

The Three Taints (tīṇi āsava), omitting the taint of wrong views, is possibly older and is more frequent in the suttas.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

2 Sabbāsava Sutta: All the Taints

6. “What are the things unfit for attention that he attends to? They are things such that when he attends to them, the unarisen taint of sensual desire arises in him and the arisen taint of sensual desire increases, the unarisen taint of being arises in him and the arisen taint of being increases, the unarisen taint of ignorance arises in him and the arisen taint of ignorance increases. These are the things unfit for attention that he attends to. And what are the things fit for attention that he does not attend to? They are things such that when he attends to them, the unarisen taint of sensual desire does not arise in him and the arisen taint of sensual desire is abandoned, the unarisen taint of being does not arise in him and the arisen taint of being is abandoned, the unarisen taint of ignorance does not arise in him and the arisen taint of ignorance is abandoned. These are the things fit for attention that he does not attend to. By attending to things unfit for attention and by not attending to things fit for attention, both unarisen taints arise in him and arisen taints increase.

Noble Truths, Noble Path: The Heart Essence of the Buddha’s Original Teachings by Bhikkhu Bodhi; p. 32

“Ignorance was banished and clear knowledge arose, darkness was banished and light arose,” and his mind was liberated from the āsavas, the primordial “influxes” that sustain the round of rebirths.⁷

Note 7: The word āsava is derived from the verb savati, meaning “to flow.” It is uncertain whether the direction of the flow is intended to be inward or outward. Some translators have rendered āsava as “outflow,” others as “canker,” “taint,” “intoxicant,” and “pollutant.” The three āsavas are:

1. sensual craving (kāmasava),
2. craving for existence (bhavāsava), and
3. ignorance (avijjāsava).

The Streamwinner (sotāpanna) destroyed the taint of wrong views. The Non-Returner (anāgāmi) destroyed the taint of sense-desire. The Perfected One (arahant) destroyed the taints of becoming and ignorance.

With the arising of the taints there is the arising of ignorance. With the arising of ignorance there is the arising of the taints.

9 Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta: Right View

66. “And what is ignorance, what is the origin of ignorance, what is the cessation of ignorance, what is the way leading to the cessation of ignorance? Not knowing about suffering, not knowing about the origin of suffering, not knowing about the cessation of suffering, not knowing about the way leading to the cessation of suffering — this is called ignorance. With the arising of the taints there is the arising of ignorance. With the cessation of the taints there is the cessation of ignorance. The way leading to the cessation of ignorance is just this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, right view... right concentration. ...

69. “When, friends, a noble disciple understands the taints, the origin of the taints, the cessation of the taints, and the way leading to the cessation of the taints, in that way he is one of right view, whose view is straight, who has unwavering confidence in the Dhamma, and has arrived at this true Dhamma.

70. “And what are the taints, what is the origin of the taints, what is the cessation of the taints, what is the way leading to the cessation of the taints? There are these three taints: the taint of sensual desire, the taint of being, and the taint of ignorance. With the arising of ignorance there is the arising of the taints.¹³² With the cessation of ignorance there is the cessation of the taints. The way leading to the cessation of the taints is just this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

71. “When a noble disciple has thus understood the taints, the origin of the taints, the cessation of the taints, and the way leading to the cessation of the taints, he entirely abandons the underlying tendency to lust, he abolishes the underlying tendency to aversion, he extirpates the underlying tendency to the view and conceit ‘I am,’ and by abandoning ignorance and arousing true knowledge he here and now makes an end of suffering. In that way too a noble disciple is one of right view, whose view is straight, who has unwavering confidence in the Dhamma, and has arrived at this true Dhamma.”

Note 132

It should be noted that while ignorance is a condition for the taints, the taints — which include the taint of ignorance — are in turn a condition for ignorance. MA says that this conditioning of ignorance by ignorance should be understood to mean that the ignorance in any one existence is conditioned by the ignorance in the preceding existence. Since this is so, the conclusion follows that no first point can be discovered for ignorance, and thus that saṃsāra is without discernible beginning.

The taints are controlled and relinquished with five aspects of restraint (saṃvara):

1. virtue (sīla), is illustrated by avoiding unsuitable seats and resorts in Method V;
2. mindfulness (sati), is illustrated by restraining the sense faculties in Method II;
3. knowledge (paññā), is illustrated by the repeated phrase “reflecting wisely” in Method III;
4. energy (vīrya), is illustrated by the removing of unwholesome thoughts in Method VI; and
5. patience (khanti), is illustrated by enduring in Method IV.

In the Majjhima Nikaya 2 Sabbāsava Sutta: All the Taints, the Buddha taught Seven Methods for restraining and abandoning the taints.

- I. Taints are abandoned by Seeing (āsavā dassanā pahātabbā) with insight (vipassanā) into the Four Noble truths (ariya catusacca):
 1. The Noble Truth of Suffering - discussed in the February 2023 Newsletter,
 2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering - discussed in the March 2023 Newsletter,
 3. The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering - discussed in the April 2023 Newsletter, and
 4. The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering - discussed in the May 2023 Newsletter.
- Method I also achieves intuitive insights (vipassanā-ñāṇa) that abandons the taints by perceiving (sañña) all phenomena in saṃsāra with The Three Characteristics of Existence (tilakkhaṇa):
 1. impermanence (anicca),
 2. suffering (dukkha) or being oppressed, and
 3. not-self (anatta).

See the October 2023 Newsletter - Insight Meditation (vipassanā) for a discussion of The Three Characteristics of Existence.

Mind Overcoming Its Cankers by Venerable Acharya Buddhārakkhita

p. 102

When insight into the characteristics becomes a direct experience, as different from an intellectual one, the mind is freed of all distortions and impurities, and the insights into the Four Noble Truths flash, illuminating the consciousness.

- The practice is to See things which do not cause the taints to arise and the arisen taints are abandoned. The destruction of taints is for one who knows how to arouse wise attention (yoniso manasikāra) and who sees to it that unwise attention (ayoniso manasikāra) does not arise. Things unfit for attention (ayoniso manasikāra) causes the un-arisen taints to arise and the arisen taints to increase.
- The practice is to not attend to views and doubts concerning a perceived 'self' (atta). By doing so, Streamwinner (sotāpanna) is achieved by abandoning three fetters (saṃyojana):
 1. personality view (sakkāya diṭṭhi),
 2. doubt (vicikicchā), and
 3. clinging to rites and rituals (sīlabbata parāmāsa).

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

2 Sabbāsava Sutta: All the Taints

3. "Bhikkhus, I say that the destruction of the taints is for one who knows and sees, not for one who does not know and see. Who knows and sees what? Wise attention and unwise attention.³³ When one attends unwisely, unarisen taints arise and arisen taints increase. When one attends wisely, unarisen taints do not arise and arisen taints are abandoned.

4. "Bhikkhus, there are taints that should be abandoned by seeing. There are taints that should be abandoned by restraining. There are taints that should be abandoned by using. There are taints that should be abandoned by enduring. There are taints that should be abandoned by avoiding. There are taints that should be abandoned by removing. There are taints that should be abandoned by developing.

Note 33

Wise attention (yoniso manasikāra) is glossed as attention that is the right means (upāya), on the right track (patha). It is explained as mental advertence, consideration, or preoccupation that accords with the truth, namely, attention to the impermanent as impermanent, etc. Unwise attention (ayoniso manasikāra) is attention that is the wrong means, on the wrong track (uppatha), contrary to the truth, namely, attention to the impermanent as permanent, the painful as pleasurable, what is not self as self, and what is foul as beautiful. Unwise attention, MA informs us, is at the root of the round of existence, for it causes ignorance and craving to increase; wise attention is at the root of liberation from the round, since it leads to the development of the Noble Eightfold Path. MA sums up the point of this passage thus: the destruction of the taints is for one who knows how to arouse wise attention and who sees to it that unwise attention does not arise.

II. Taints are abandoned by Restraining (āsavā saṃvarā pahātabbā) with Sense-Control (indriya saṃvara). The Six Sense Faculties (indriya) are:

1. eye (cakkhu),
2. ear (sotā),
3. nose (ghāna),
4. tongue (jivhā),
5. body (kāya), and
6. mind (mana).

- Mindfulness (sati) is the primary factor cultivated and used to restrain the sense faculties. Sense control is being watchful at the sense faculties and thereby having full control over them. The Four Foundations of Mindfulness (satipaṭṭhāna) cultivates mindfulness (sati) and awareness (sampajañña) with the following four contemplations:

1. Contemplation of the Body (kāyānupassanā),
2. Contemplation of Feelings (vedanā sañña),
3. Contemplation of Mind (citta sañña), and
4. Contemplation of Mind Objects (Dhammā sañña).

The Four Foundations of Mindfulness is described in the October 2023 Newsletter - Insight Meditation (vipassanā).

- The six sense bases are also called "sense doors" because they are the six perceptual gateways through which the mind experiences the world. The Buddha taught that the six sense doors should be guarded with mindfulness, so as not to crave, cling and attach to the sense objects, thereby avoiding the accumulation of mental defilements - the taints.

- Sense restraint is freeing the mind from addiction to sense stimulation.

Mind Overcoming Its Cankers by Venerable Acharya Buddharakkhita

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It is like placing a sentry at a gateway or door, who has full control over his area by virtue of his vigilance thereon. Similarly, when a seeker applies mindfulness on any one of the sense-doors, by this simple act of attentiveness or vigilance, all cankers are automatically removed, if they have arisen, and if there are none, the mind is so fortified that they cannot arise.

III. Taints are abandoned by Using (āsavā paṭisevanā pahātabbā) with wisdom (paññā) the necessities of life. The necessities of life are the four requisites (cattāro paṭiccaye):

1. clothing, robes (cīvara),
2. food, alms (piṇḍapāta),
3. lodging (senāsana) and
4. medicine (bhesajja).

- The practice is to wisely reflect on why these necessities are required and how they are to be utilized in the best possible way. Wise reflection is rooted in ethical conduct, simplicity, and awareness of impermanence. Reflecting wisely on necessities recognizes the difference between what is truly needed for physical well-being and what is driven by greed or craving.
- Taints are not nurtured and are abandoned when the necessities of life are used wisely. Suffering is experienced when the necessities of life is not used properly.
- Knowledge of the proper use of the necessities of life is developed.

IV. Taints are abandoned by Enduring (āsavā adhvāsanā pahātabbā) patiently physical hardships, harsh speech and painful feelings. The practice is to consciously and deliberately endure difficulties and afflictions caused by external circumstances, harsh treatment by others, and adversity in general. In order to withstand a hostile and disagreeable environment without becoming upset, anxious and angry, the cultivation of patience (khanti), restraint and forgiveness is required to remain calm and collected. Patience was taught by the Buddha as a great virtue and a spiritual perfection; see the June 2024 Newsletter - Perfection of Patience (khanti pāramī) for elaboration.

The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom translated by Acharya Buddharakkhita

Verse 184

Enduring patience is the highest austerity. "Nibbāna is Supreme," say the Buddhas. He is not a true monk who harms another, nor a real renunciate who oppresses others.

V. Taints are abandoned by Avoiding (āsavā parivajjanā pahātabbā) dangerous environments and bad friends.

- Avoidance is an ethical response, based on Fear of Wrongdoing (ottappa) and Sense of Shame (hiri). The practice is to refrain from anything and any situation that may endanger one morally. Virtue (sīla) or moral purification constitutes the moving force of Method V.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

Note 416

Shame (hiri) and fear of wrongdoing (ottappa) are two complementary qualities designated by the Buddha "the guardians of the world" because they serve as the foundation for morality. Shame has the characteristic of disgust with evil, is dominated by a sense of self-respect, and manifests itself as conscience. Fear of wrongdoing has the characteristic of dread of evil, is dominated by a concern for the opinions of others, and manifests itself as fear of doing evil.

- Monastics train to avoid sitting on unsuitable seats occupied by (women for a monk and men for a nun) and unsuitable resorts (gocara).
 - Unsuitable seats are two kinds: sitting with a woman/man on a screened seat convenient for sexual intercourse, and sitting alone with a woman/man in a private place.

- Resort is a proper resort for alms and the proper deportment of a monastic: serene and self-possessed bearing.

VI. Taints are abandoned by Removing (āsavā vinodanā pahātabbā) arisen unwholesome thoughts of sensual desire (kāmacchanda), ill will (vyāpāda), and cruelty (vihimsā).

- The first step in dispelling harmful thoughts is to recognize that they are unwholesome, which requires mindfulness, concentration and equanimity. Mindfulness of the unwholesome thought (akusala vitakka) wears away the greed, hate, and delusion that fuels it and the unwholesome thought is then diminished.
- Right Effort (sammā-vāyāma) is the sixth path factor in The Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga) which diminishes and eliminates unwholesome (akusala) contents of mind and to encourage the emergence and maintenance of wholesome (kusala) contents of mind. This is the cultivation and arousal of energy to purify the mind of defilements: the Three Unwholesome Roots and the taints. Right Effort consists of generating four states of mind:
 1. the effort to avoid unwholesome states of mind from arising (saṃvara-padhāna),
 2. the effort to overcome unwholesome states of mind that have arisen (pahāna-padhāna),
 3. the effort to cultivate wholesome states of mind (bhāvanā-padhāna), and
 4. the effort to maintain wholesome states of mind that have arisen (anurakkhaṇa-padhāna).

The Noble Eightfold Path is discussed in the May 2023 Newsletter - Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering.

VII. Taints are abandoned by Developing (āsavā bhāvanā pahātabbā) The Seven Enlightenment Factors (satta bojjhaṅgā):

1. mindfulness (sati),
2. discrimination of phenomena, analysis of qualities, investigation of Dhamma (dhamma-vicaya),
3. energy, persistence (viriya),
4. rapture, joy (pīti),
5. tranquility, calm (passaddhi),
6. concentration (sāmādhi), and
7. equanimity (upekkhā).

- Method I eradicates the first three fetters resulting in Streamwinner, Method VII eradicates the remaining seven fetters resulting in the three remaining Noble Ones.

There are ten fetters (saṃyojana) tying beings to saṃsāra:

1. personality belief (sakkāya diṭṭhi),
2. doubt (vicikicchā),
3. clinging to rites and rituals (sīlabbata parāmāsa),
4. sensual desire (kāma rāga),
5. ill will (vyāpāda),
6. craving for existence in the Form World (rūpa rāga), fine material existence,
7. craving for existence in the Formless World (arūpa rāga), immaterial existence,
8. conceit (māna),
9. restlessness (uddhacca), and
10. ignorance (avijjā).

Noble Ones (ariya puggala)

1. Streamwinner (sotāpanna) is free from fetters 1-3. Realized in Method I.
2. Once Returner (sakadāgāmi) is free from fetters 1-3 and has overcome fetters 4 and 5 in their grosser form. Realized in Method VII.
3. Non-Returner (anāgāmi) is free from fetters 1-5. Realized in Method VII.
4. Perfected One (arahant) is free from all 10 fetters. Realized in Method VII.

The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom translated by Acharya Buddharakkhita

Verse 89

Those whose minds have reached full excellence in the factors of enlightenment, who, having renounced acquisitiveness, rejoice in not clinging to things—rid of cankers, glowing with wisdom, they have attained Nibbāna in this very life.¹⁰

Note 10

This verse describes the arahat ... The “cankers” (āsava) are the four basic defilements of sensual desire, desire for continued existence, false views, and ignorance.

Methods I and VII ultimately destroys the taints; while Methods II-VI keeps the taints restrained. By restraining and overcoming the taints repeatedly, they become weakened, not fed, and made to atrophy and die of attrition. The final fruit of developing insight (vipassanā) is the knowledge of the destruction of the taints (āsavakkhaya) and is the enlightenment of the Perfected One (arahant).

Announcements

- Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center has a presence on Meet-Up social media and we ask that you please sign-up for every event that you are planing to attend at www.MeetUp.com. Some people are intimidated by a small number of attendees and a larger number will be encouraging.
- Please help advertise Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center by providing a review at www.google.com/maps.

Activities of the Meditation Center

- Group sitting meditation practice for one hour is held Monday through Friday at 6:30AM and everyday at 5:30PM. After meditation, Ajahn Kumāro is available to answer questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com on the days and time you would like to participate.
- Group sitting meditation practice for two hours is held every Saturday and Sunday at 6:30AM.
- The days of the full moon, new moon and the two half moons are called in Pāli: The Uposatha, and is a Buddhist day of observance. A lunar calendar is available at <https://cal.forestsangha.org>. Ajahn Kumāro will perform the ceremony of giving the five precepts on the full and new moon days after the 5:30PM meditation. You may elect to keep the precepts as long as you see fit (one night, a week, a lifetime, etc).
- Meditation Workshop is held on the first Sunday of each month between 11:00AM and 1:00PM. The workshop will provide instruction and practice for sitting and walking meditation. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- A recording of a Dhamma Talk from an experienced Thai Forest Teacher will be played on the third Sunday of each month. Sitting meditation starts at 4:30PM and the Dhamma Talk will be played afterwards. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- Every Saturday at 4:15PM the Meditation Center will be cleaned. Please join us in maintaining a clean space for practicing and discussing the Dhamma.
- There is a Library at the Meditation Center. You may browse for books to borrow at 5:00PM and check out the books for three weeks.
- Everyday at 8:40AM Ajahn Kumāro leaves for alms-round in order to give residents of Asheville the opportunity to earn merit by practicing generosity of giving food and placing it into the alms bowl. Ajahn does not accept or handle money. Ajahn usually arrives at the Whole Foods Market, 70 Merrimon Ave. just before 9:00AM and stands in front of the store for alms.
- Ajahn is available at other times during the day to meet with individuals or groups when requested.
- For more additional information please send an email to mittameditation@gmail.com. We also have a presence on Facebook and Meet-Up social media.

Request for Support

The Meditation Center is in need of support in order to accomplish its' mission and vision. The support may take various forms. You will support the Meditation Center by:

- Being present at the Meditation Center for group meditation.
- Giving alms during alms-round.
- Bringing to the Meditation Center items that are listed on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com.
- Volunteering your skills, energy and time at the Meditation Center.
- Informing your family and friends about the Meditation Center and encouraging them to participate in the activities.
- Donating financial contributions for the Meditation Center's expenses. Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center is recognized as a tax-exempt organization by the IRS under section 501(c)(3). Donations are deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. Financial contributions may be made on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com and additional means for making financial donations may be discussed with Elisha Buhler at (910) 922-1549.