

The Brain on the Mind

&

the Mind on the Brain

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# Four Noble Truths of Buddhism

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- I There is suffering
- II Suffering has a cause
- III The cause can be removed
- IV The 8-fold path to do this

# Washing the Brain and Purifying the Mind

Henk Barendregt & Karin Videc

## Summary of the previous talks

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1. We are conditioned (to give our species a high survival power)

We suffer (if we cannot do this)

2. There is existential suffering

(‘we loose all holds, sink into the ground’: dissociate  $\mapsto$  fear)

(panic struck we try to suppress this, with a lot of side-effects)

3. A moment of mindfulness is a moment of freedom from conditioning

4. mindfulness becomes our second nature

mindfulness becomes first nature

# The 8-fold path

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## The *right*

view }  
intention } wisdom

speech }  
action } virtue  
livelihood }

effort }  
concentration } mental development  
mindfulness }

Become an observer

Better: [become observation](#)

# The washing machine model of meditation

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We meditate; observing at rest feels good

After a while it becomes slightly boring or painful

Mindfulness helps

Ego wants to use mindfulness for its purposes!

We no longer are the pure observer

Suffering comes back, in a stronger way

Returning to pure mindfulness

Feeling good!

Ego repeats its trick!!

Suffering!!

Pure mindfulness

Feeling better!!

Ego!!!

Suffering!!!

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## Two extreme points

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High point (ecstasy and bliss: mystical experience)

Low point (the three characteristics: chaos, disgust, beyond control)

In the mystical state: detach from it!

In the nausea: detach from it

## Final stages

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Develop

equanimity

calmness

joy

in the presence of the 3 Characteristics

Then the work of mental development by vipassana is over



## First path

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Then surrender

Accept emptiness

One sees the abyss, but it loses its force

actually it is a safe place:

it is always there and does not depend on anything

All fear for the emptiness has gone

## The four paths

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- 1 No more belief in self  
no more insecurity  
no more superstition
  - 2 Greed and hatred diluted
  - 3 Greed and hatred eliminated
  - 4 Restlessness eliminated  
pride eliminated  
sleepiness eliminated  
desire for existence eliminated  
ignorance eliminated
- } eliminated