

YEARLONG

SEEING WITH THE EYE OF DHAMMA

a Contemplative Journey

**DATES 2022 – 3RD THURSDAYS OF EACH MONTH
BEGINNING FEBRUARY 17TH**
TIME 7:00-8:00 PM CENTRAL TIME (USA)

ONLINE VIA ZOOM

Human life is at heart a **contemplative journey of deepening wisdom, kindness, ethics, and freedom**. For Ajahn Buddhādāsa, this journey starts with the recognition that spiritual cultivation has a central place in our lives. His teaching in *Seeing with the Eye of Dhamma* examines the capacities required for the journey and maps a progression of increasingly subtle inquiries that extend into all aspects of life. He describes how one can mature through ever more satisfying realizations of “the best that life has to offer.”

Editing *Seeing with the Eye of Dhamma* was an arduous and profound journey for me. The depth and power was in the contemplation required for each chapter. The course is my way of sharing that journey with other Dhamma students.

This course and book are concerned with the **practice of inquiry and contemplation broadly within the activities of quotidian life**. For this purpose, Ajahn Buddhādāsa poses many questions, provides examples of how to pursue them, and leaves much for students to uncover themselves. Each chapter of this book maps a stage of this journey and how it relates to the final purpose of our lives. This course will highlight these questions for month-by-month examination (*dhammavicaya*, the second factor of awakening).

We start with an inquiry into the nature of human life, emphasizing the dilemmas of the sense media – hearing, touching, seeing, smelling, tasting, and thinking – without which experience can’t happen and through which all suffering occurs. We will explore the ongoing dynamic of body and mind fabricating each other – usually, but not necessarily, as suffering, depending on whether ignorance or wisdom is in charge. When insight is lacking, clinging to “me” and “mine” occurs. Focused contemplation leads to the understanding that all aspects of life are fundamentally empty of “me” and

“mine,” of any abiding self we can cling to, possess, or control. Body and mind are “just so.”

Our ordinary wishes for happiness and well-being lead us to the recognition that the central role of “mind” requires its development and maturation. Such psycho-spiritual training unfolds through stages that reveal deeper layers of life and mind’s reality. This meditation and contemplative cultivation require courage in facing afflictions and hindrances, and skill in both serenity and clarity. When practice is sincere and consistent, thusness and emptiness are progressively realized; nobility and refuge are internalized.

The Buddha gave us maps of the journey that we can use to assess what lies ahead, how far we have grown, how we might backslide, and characteristics that need to be strengthened. The contemplative journey observes the myriad forms of egoistic rebirth, the recycling of *samsāra*, and the fabricating of mind-body aggregates. It discerns the wholesome potentials from among destructive habits, and increasingly intuits the possibility of pausing the needless busyness of modern existence. So, we must study the sense media and what arises from them—the territory where life is lived. When we wander without true understanding, we fabricate the life of clinging to “me” and “mine,” the so-called aggregates of clinging.

Seeing the basic qualities and elements of experience undermines the habits of clinging and affliction. The more contemplation sees the compounding of such elements, the basic stuff of experience, the more we recognize an alternate to fabricating egoistic suffering. We have glimpses of a rather unique element, *nibbāna*, that doesn’t concoct more trouble and is itself “unconcocted.” The more cultivation of mind—not really of “me” or “you”—sees how everything is just natural elements behaving impermanently, the less there’s somebody to be the center of it all. In the space between egoistic constructs, mind’s pristine luminosity awakens.

Course Format: We will meet the third Thursday evening each month to focus on one chapter of *Seeing with the Eye of Dhamma*. Santikaro will draw attention to highlights of the chapter and summarize themes to contemplate in the weeks ahead. There will be time for questions. The recording will be available the next day (in case you couldn’t attend live).

Between meetings: You are welcome to share insights and questions with Santikaro. He will post some of these through our Google Doc and respond as appropriate. You are encouraged to check for such posts weekly.

Dates: February 17, March 17, April 21, May 19, June 16, and so on. If a date must change, there will be ample warning.

Registration: Fill out [this on-line form](#) and send [\\$100 registration fee following the information here](#). This fee is to encourage commitment to full participation. Nobody

will be refused because of inability to pay this fee. Please email us [if you cannot afford the fee](#) so that we can make other arrangements.

A week before the course begins, you'll receive an email giving access to the **course's Google Doc**, which will be the on-line hub for information concerning this course, including the Zoom link, schedule, and links to recordings.

Recordings: If you must miss a meeting, please listen to the recordings that will be posted on the course's Google Doc.

Resources: Santikaro will share articles, links, and recordings through the course's Google Doc.

Reciprocal support: The Buddha's teachings, sanghas of training and practice, places of practice, and practice resources involve the hard work of many people, technical skills, financial generosity, and an overall spirit of reciprocal service. As a participant in this course, in addition to the registration payment, we ask you to support our work in ways suitable to your means and abilities. The kindness of others has made this course possible; your help insures that such activities continue. Please [visit our dāna page on a regular basis](#).

Occasional retreats: If a retreat coincides with one of our meetings, Santikaro will reschedule an alternative date for that meeting.

Any questions? Please [email Santikaro](#).