Introduction

The 37 limbs of awakening

1.1 The “limbs” in the Pāli Canon. The Pali term bodhi, pakkhiya, dhammā literally means “states on the side of awakening,” that is, those things conducive to spiritual liberation. Although the phrase is very rare in the Suttas, it is a common term for the 37 factors, which is a comprehensive list of the Buddha’s teaching in terms of doctrine, found in a number of early Sūtras and Vinaya texts.\

These factors are sometimes translated as “requisites of awakening” because they conduce to the attainment of awakening, that is, the knowledge of the four supramundane paths (stream-winning, once-return, non-return, arhathood). These 37 factors are divided into 7 sets, which we will look at in this study.

The 37 limbs of awakening (satta, tiṁsa bodhi, pakkhiyā dhammā) are mentioned as a set some 74 times in the Vinaya Pitaka and the Nikāyas, representing some 27 distinct occasions when these 7 sets of teachings are cited. In the Mahā Sākul’udāyī Sutta (M 77), five reasons are given why the Buddha’s disciples esteem and rely on him (M 77.10/2:9). The fifth of these reasons is that the Buddha explains to his disciples the various spiritual paths (M 77.15-37/211-22). The first 7 sections [15-21] of this teaching deal with wholesome states that are as a set is known as “the limbs of awakening,” but not so mentioned there. These limbs are so called (and explained) in the Visuddhi, magga (Vism 22.33-43/678-682) as comprising the following seven sets of factors:

- The 4 focuses of mindfulness (cattāro sati paṭṭhāna) (D 22; M 10).
- The 4 right endeavours (cattāro padhāna) (M 2:11).
- The 4 bases of spiritual success [powers] (cattāro iddhi pāda) (M 1:103).
- The 5 spiritual faculties (pañc’indriya) (M 2:12).
- The 5 spiritual powers (pañca bala) (M 2:12).
- The 7 awakening-factors (satta bojjha ga) (M 1:11).
- The noble eightfold path (ariy’aṅgika magga) (D 2:311 f).

These limbs of awakening are so called because they help one to gain awakening. Explanations to each of these limbs are given in these Commentaries:

1.2 Importance of the “7 sets” formula. As mentioned earlier, the list of the 7 sets are found in a number of early Buddhist Sūtras and Vinaya texts [1.1]. These 7 sets in fact form the Buddha’s

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3 See Gethin 2001:266 f.

4 For a study of these sets, see SD 10. The mnemonic for memorizing this set of 7 is “Triple 4, double 5, 7-8”.

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teaching in a nutshell, his central teachings common to all the early schools. Johannes Bronkhorst goes on to note that

> It seems clear that this is an early, perhaps the earliest, list of the type that came to be called mātrikā/maṭikā and formed the basis for the later Abhidharma works. The connexion between this list and Abhidharma seems confirmed by a passage in the Kinti Sutta (M 2:239) which speaks of monks who have been trained in the items of this list and then disagree about Abhidharma. (Bronkhorst, “Dharma and Abhidharma,” 1985:305)

**The Kinti Sutta** (M 103) records that the Buddha, after listing the 7 sets, declares to the monks (and all practitioners) that

> in these things you should all train in concord, with mutual appreciation, without disputing. While you are training in concord, with mutual appreciation, without disputing, two monks might make different assertions with regard to the Dharma (abhidhamme)… (M 103.3-4/2:239 f)

The Buddha goes on to point out how the monks should settle any differences regarding the spirit [meaning] (attha) or the letter [phrasing] (vyāñjana) of the teaching by amicably reasoning them out. The Majjhima Commentary glosses abhidhamme as referring to the 7 sets (MA 4:29). This important passage on the resolution of doctrinal problems is a good example of early Buddhist hermeneutics is found in a slightly expanded version in the Pāsādika Sutta (D 29).

2 **Satipaṭṭhāna**

Satipaṭṭhāna is properly resolved as sati (mindfulness) + upaṭṭhāna (application), although patṭhāna (setting up, foundation), too, gives it a similar sense. In practical terms, the word “focus” best describes both the actions and the results when satipaṭṭhāna is applied. The four focusses of mindfulness are: the contemplation of the body (kāyānupassanā); the contemplation of feeling (vedanā'nupassanā), the contemplation of mind (cittānupassanā) and the contemplation of phenomena (dhammānupassana).

The four focusses of mindfulness form a complete system of mindfulness (“meditation”) practice for the development of calm and insight. The method is given at length in the Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta (D 22) and the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta (M 10), and mentioned in a collection of short suttas forming the Satipaṭṭhāna Sānyutta (S 47).

3 **Padhāna**

Padhāna is a synonym of vāyāma, both meaning “effort.” While the former, as samma-p,padhāna, is used for the four right (or “supreme”) efforts as an independent set (as in the Mahā Sakul’udāyī Sutta), the latter, sammā,vāyāma is applied only as a subset (the sixth factor) of the noble eightfold path. It is actually only one mental factor, effort (viriya), but performs four functions. The four right efforts or endeavours are:

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6 “Perhaps abhi dhame in this passage must be understood as two words, ‘as regards the dhamma’; cf CPD sv abhidhamma.” (Bronkhorst’s fn)
7 M 103.5-8/2:239-241.
8 D 29.18-21/3:128 f. Another famous early hermeutical tool are the four “great references” (mahāpadesa), of which there are two, the Vinaya version (V 1:250, 2:118) and the Sutta version (D 16.4.7-11/2:123 f; A 4.180/ 2:167-170). See Mahā Parinibbāna S (D 16) = SD 9 Introd (11).
The 4 right endeavours are explained in the Samma-p, padhāna Vibhaṅga (Vbh ch 8/208-215) and fully commented on in its Commentary (VbhA 288-302). See also the Commentaries to the Mahā Sakul’udāyī Sutta (MA 3:243 ff) and the Padhāna Sutta (A 2.1/1:47-49; AA 2:93).

4 Iddhi, pāda

The word iddhi here signifies all spiritual and supramundane states that one needs to master in the practice of the Buddha’s teaching. The main method of mastering the Buddha’s teaching is called the bases of spiritual success (iddhi, pāda), also variously translated as “the means of accomplishment” and “the path to spiritual power.” The four bases of spiritual success are (1) the desire to act (chanda), (2) effort (viriya), (3) mind or consciousness (citta) and (4) investigation (i.e. wisdom) (vīmānsā).

In post-canonical Buddhist psychology, they are also called “the four predominants” (cattāro adhipati), that is, factors that dominate their conascent states (that arise together) in undertaking and accomplishing difficult or important tasks. A predominant had total control of the whole citta (mind-moment), while a faculty (indriya) [5] controls only in its respective sphere. As such, several faculties may be present in a single citta, but only one predominant can be present at any time. [11]

The iddhi, pāḍā exists on both mundane and supramundane states. [12] On a more worldly level, the iddhi, pāḍā are the “steps to success”. First step to success is a proactive attitude, the desire to act. This should be followed up with the proper effort, and the perseverance of a mind fixed on the goal. As the effort progress, one should examine one’s progress and adjust one strategy and energy according to the investigation.

The 4 bases of spiritual success are explained in the Iddhi, pāḍā Vibhaṅga (Vbh ch 9/216-276) and its Commentary (VbhA 303-308), and briefly commented on in the Commentary to the Četo, khila Sutta (M 16; MA 2:69).

5 Indriya

The faculties (indriya) and the powers (bala) [6] comprise the same five factors—faith (saddhā), effort (viriya), mindfulness (sati), concentration (samādhi) and wisdom (pāññā)—but they function differently. When the “faculties” control their respective sphere, the same “powers” are unshakable by their opposites. As such, the five faculties exercise control in their respective spheres of resolution (adhimokkha), exertion (paggaha), awareness (upāṭṭhāna), non-distraction (avikkhepa) and discernment [vision] (dassana), which help to overcome their respective opposites of indecision, laziness, heedlessness, agitation and delusion.

In the cultivation of the faculties, that is, in spiritual practice, faith and wisdom are to be balanced so as to avoid blind belief and mere intellectual cleverness; effort and concentration are to be balanced to avoid mental restlessness and sluggishness. Mindfulness is the key factor that keeps all the other factors in balance and harmony.

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[10] Eg Abhs 7.6 = Abhs:SR 179 = Abhs:BRS 279. For the Pāli, see §16n below.
[11] The four predominants (adhipati) are the mental concomitants (cetasika) desire (chanda, the desire to act), effort (viriya), consciousness (citta), and investigation (vīmānsā, i.e. wisdom). See A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma (Abhs:BRS) 274 f for other details.

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The 5 spiritual faculties often appear in the Canon but are not explained in detail in the Nikāyas or the Abhidhamma Commentaries and only briefly explained in the *Visuddhi,magga* (Vism 22.35, 37/679).

**6 Bala**

The 5 spiritual powers, like the spiritual faculties [5], are not dealt with in detail in the Nikāyas or the Abhidhamma Commentaries, and only briefly explained in the *Visuddhi,magga* (Vism 22.36 f/679).

Although there is no detailed mention of the spiritual faculties and the spiritual powers in the Vinaya and Nikāyas, they actually constitute some of the most basic Buddhist doctrines as evident from the table in the Introduction above.

While a faculty (*indriya*) is essentially active but a power (*bala*) passive, the latter is “unshakable and unassailable by its opposite” (Gethin 2001:145).

**7 Bojjhāṅga**

The 7 awakening-factors are (1) mindfulness (*sati*); (2) investigation of states (*dhamma,vicaya*); (3) effort; (4) zest (joyful interest); (5) tranquillity (*passaddhi*); (6) concentration (*samādhi*); and (7) equanimity (*upekkhā*). They are commented on in the Commentary to the *Mūla,pariyāya Sutta* (MA 1:82-84). Of the seven factors, “investigation of states” (*dhamma,vicaya*), that is, insight into material and mental states as they really are, is a designation for wisdom (*paññā*). “Tranquillity” (*passaddhi*) means calm both of consciousness (*citta,passaddhi*) and of the mental body (*kāya,passaddhi*). Equanimity (*upekkhā*) here means equipoise or mental neutrality (*tatra,majjhattatā*), one of the universal beautiful (*sobhana*) cetasikas, and not worldly neutral feeling.

The three factors of investigation (*dhamma,vicaya*), effort (*viriya*) and zest (*pīti*) counteract torpor. The three factors of tranquillity (*passaddhi*), concentration (*samādhi*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*) counteract mental agitation. Mindfulness (*sati*) keeps the two sets of factors in a harmonious balance.

**8 Magga**

The noble eightfold path comprises the following factors:

1. right view (*samma dīthī*).
2. right thought (*samma sankappa*).
3. right speech (*samma vācā*).
4. right action (*samma kammantā*).
5. right livelihood (*samma jīva*).
6. right effort (*samma vīma*).
7. right mindfulness (*samma sati*).
8. right concentration (*samma samādhi*).

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13 Gethin 2001:355 f (App) gives the occurrences of the spiritual faculties (3/4/5 etc) thus: V 1:294; D 3:239, 278, 284; M 1:19 f, 164, 479; S 5:193-204, 219-243; A 1:42-44, 118 f, 2:141, 149-152, 3:277 f, 281 f, 4:225, 264-266, 5:56; Tha 352, 437, 595, 672, 1114; Thī 170 f. Nm 115, 233; Pm 2:166-176; Pe 37, 41, [48, 51 f, 69] 71 f, 88, 97 f, 128 f, 171, 183, 185 f; Nett 7, 19, 28, 100 f; Miln 33 ff, 43. Corrections and additions are given within square brackets.

14 Gethin 2001:356 (App) gives the occurrences of the spiritual powers (2/4/5/7 etc) thus: V 1:294; D 3:213, 229, 253; S 5:249-253; A 2:141, 3:10-12, 245, 277 f, 281 f, 4:3 f. Tha 352, 437, 494, 672, 1114; Thī 170 f.; Nm 14, 151; Pm 2:166-176; Pe 37, 79, 179, 189; Nett 100 f. Corrections and additions are given within square brackets.

15 On the ubiquity of the spiritual faculties, see Gethin 2001:138-140.

16 See Gethin 2001:140-145.

17 See Gethin 2001:146-189 (ch 5).

18 See Abhs:BRS 85-88, 281.
The Mahā Cattārīsaka S (M 117) says that right view (sammā, diṭṭhi) comes first because it underlies each and every other factor, without which, the factor cannot be “right” (sammā), that is, contributive to the going up the path to liberation. Right view is also the cetasika of wisdom effecting the proper understanding of the four noble truths. Right thought (or intention) (sammā, sankappa) is the cetasika of initial application (vitakka) directed toward renunciation, lovingkindness and non-violence.

Path factors (3)-(5) are identical with the three abstinences (virati), that is,

1. **Natural abstinence (sampattavirojana).** This is the abstinence from evil when the opportunity arises to do so, in terms of one social position, age, educational level, etc. For example, one refrains from theft out of the concern that one’s reputation would be hurt if one is caught.
2. **Abstinence by undertaking (samādāna, virati).** This is the abstinence from evil when one has undertaken the precepts, such as the five precepts of abstaining against killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech and intoxication.
3. **Abstinence by eradication (samucchada, virati).** This is the abstinence associated with the supramundane path consciousness that arises destroying the disposition towards evil. While the previous two are mundane, this is supramundane.

Each level of abstinence are effected in three ways, that is, by right speech (sammā, vācā), right action (sammā kammantā), and right livelihood (sammā ājīva).

Right effort (sammā vāyāma) is the same as the four endeavours (padhāna) [3], also called the four endeavours (samma-p, padhāna). Right mindfulness (sammā sati) is the same as the four focusses of mindfulness (satipaṭṭhāna) [2]. Right concentration (sammā samādhi) is defined in terms of the four dhyanas (jhāna) (eg D 22/2:313).

The noble eightfold path is commented on in the *Mūla-pariyāya Sutta* Commentary (MA 1:105) and very briefly explained from a different angle in the *Magga Vibhanga* Commentary (VbhA 319). An authoritative monograph on the limbs of awakening is *The Buddhist Path to Awakening* by Rupert Gethin (2001 esp chs 7-9).

9 The spiritual faculties and the spiritual powers

Thanissaro Bhikkhu, in *The Wings of Awakening*, has presented a table of references for the 7 sets classed under the 5 spiritual faculties (1996:xii), the names of which have been standardized following those used in this series:

**Faith (saddhā)**
- Right speech (Noble eightfold path)
- Right action (Noble eightfold path)
- Right livelihood (Noble eightfold path)
- Zeal (desire or will-power) (Base of spiritual success)

**Effort (viriya)**
- Right effort (Noble eightfold path)
- Four right endeavours (The four endeavours)
- Effort (Base of spiritual success)
- Effort (Awakening-factor)

**Mindfulness (sati)**
- The 4 focusses of mindfulness
- Right mindfulness (Noble eightfold path)
- Mind (consciousness) (Base of spiritual success)

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19 See SD 6.10 (2004).
Concentration (*samādhi*)

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Wisdom (*paññā*)

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<td>Investigation</td>
<td>(Base of spiritual success)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equanimity</td>
<td>(Awakening-factor)</td>
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</tbody>
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*20 “Investigation of states,” or “Dharma-analysis.” “Dharma” here refers to physical and mental states.*
The Greater Discourse to Sakul’udāyī
(M 77.15-21/2:11 f, excerpt)

[1]
1 Thus have I heard.
   At one time the Blessed One was staying in the Squirrels’ Feeding Ground in the Bamboo Grove near Rājagaha.

THE 37 AWAKENING FACTORS

[11]
(1) The 4 focusses of mindfulness

15 Furthermore, Udāyī, I have taught my disciples21 the way: my disciples who practise the way cultivate the four focusses of mindfulness (cattāro sati’paṭṭhāna).

(1) Here, Udāyī, a monk, having put away22 covetousness and displeasure23 for the world,24 dwells contemplating the body in the body (kāyānupassanā),25 ardent, fully aware, mindful.26

21 “Disciples,” sāvakā, lit “listeners”.
22 Vineyya, this means that the five hindrances have to be abandoned prior to practising satipatthāna. This is because the hindrances, in the form of mental impurities (cetaso upakkilesa), weaken wisdom (pāññāya dabbali-karane) (D 2:83, 3:49, 101, A 2:211, 3:93, 100, 386 f, Vbh 245, 256). In the Nalakapāṇa S, the Buddha tells Anuruddha. “While [a clansman] still does not attain to zest and joy that are secluded from sensual pleasures and secluded from unwholesome states, or to something more peaceful than that, covetousness [and the other four hindrances] will invade his mind and remain…” (M 1:463=68.6). (I thank Ajahn Brahmavanīso for pointing this out.)
23 Abhijjhā,domanassa, which Walshe (1995:335 & n632) renders as “hankering and fretting for the way: my disciples who practise the way cultivate the four focusses of mindfulness (cattāro sati’paṭṭhāna).
24 Abhijjhā,domanassa, which Walshe (1995:335 & n632) renders as “hankering and fretting for the way: my disciples who practise the way cultivate the four focusses of mindfulness (cattāro sati’paṭṭhāna).”
25 Abhijjhā,domanassa, which Walshe (1995:335 & n632) renders as “hankering and fretting for the way: my disciples who practise the way cultivate the four focusses of mindfulness (cattāro sati’paṭṭhāna).”
26 “World” (loka). The Vibhaṅga says: “This very body is the world, and the five aggregates of clinging (i.e. form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness) are the world—this is called the world.” (Vbh 195). However, in his amplified tr at Vibh 105, U Thittila has “world (i.e., in ideational objects)” (dhammā, mental objects) (Vibh:T 139).
27 “Contemplating the body in the body”, §25 “contemplating feelings in the feelings”, §26 “contemplating mind in the mind, and §27 “contemplating mind-objects in the mind-objects”. In each case, they are not to be seen as “This is mine” (etam mama) (which arises through craving, taṇhā), or as “This I am” (eso ‘ham asmi) (due to conceit, māna), or as “This is my self” (eso me attā) (due to wrong view, diṭṭhi) (Anattā,lakkhaṇa S, S 3:68). In short, such experiences are not “beliefs” but direct experiences of reality. See Peter Harvey, The Selfless Mind, 1995: 32 f.
28 Āṭāṭī sampajāṇo satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhā,domanassaṁ here is essentially synonymous with vigatābhijjhā vagata,vyāpādo asammūṭha sampajāṇo patissato mentioned in connection with the four Divine Abodes (brahma,vihāra) (Kesaputtīya S, A 1:192=3.65.15). Their application, however, differ: the former points to the result of meditation, while the latter is a part of the meditation process itself. On sampajāṇo satimā, see Vism 163 = 4.172 explains that full awareness (sampajānīna) has the characteristic of non-confusion; its function is not
(2) …he dwells contemplating feelings as feelings (vedanā’’upāsana)…
(3) …he dwells contemplating the mind as mind (cittānupāsana)…

And in this way, many of my disciples dwell having attained to the perfection that is the peak of superknowledge.27

(2) The 4 right endeavours

Furthermore, Udāyī, I have taught my disciples the way: my disciples who practise the way cultivate the four endeavours (cattāro padhāna):29

(1) Here, Udāyī, a monk rouses the desire for the non-arising (samvara padhāna) of unarisen evil unwholesome states, and endeavours, rouses effort, exerts the mind, and strives.

(2) He rouses the desire for the abandoning (pahāna padhāna) of arisen evil unwholesome states, and endeavours, rouses effort, exerts the mind, and strives.

(3) He rouses the desire for the arising (bhāvanā padhāna) of unarisen wholesome states, and endeavours, rouses effort, exerts the mind, and strives.

(4) He rouses the desire for the maintaining (anurakkhanā padhāna), non-disappearance, strengthening, increase and developing to fulfillment of arisen wholesome states, and endeavours, rouses effort, exerts the mind, and strives.

And in this way, many of my disciples dwell having attained to the perfection that is the peak of superknowledge.

27 “Attained to the perfection that is the peak of superknowledge,” abhiññ, vosāna, pārami, patted, alt tr: “attained to the perfection and peak of superknowledge.” Comy says that this refers to arhathood (MA 3:243). M:NB notes that “this may be the only sense that the word pārami bears in the four Nikāyas. In the later Theravāda literature, beginning perhaps with such works as the Buddhavani, this word comes to signify the perfect virtues that a bodhisatta must fulfill over many lives in order to attain Buddhahood. In that context it corresponds to the pāramitā of the Mahāyāna literature, though the numerical lists of virtues overlap only in part.” (M:NB 1284 n763). PED says that abhiññ has an “older wider meaning of special supernormal power of apperception and knowledge to be acquired by long training in life and thought.” Later, it especially refers to one of the six superknowledges, won both by the Buddha (M 1:69) and by his disciples (S 1:191, 2:217, 222). On abhiññ, see Jayatilleke 1963:438-442. On the 6 superpowers, see Kevala S (D 11) = SD 1 Intro.

28 “Disciples,” sāvakā, lit “listeners”.

29 (1) Anuppannānaṃ pāpakānaṃ akusalānaṃ dhimmanānaṃ anuppādāya chaṇḍaṃ janeti vāyamati viriyaṃ ārabhati cittān pañcagāhātī padahati. (2) Uppannānaṃ pāpakānaṃ akusalānaṃ dhimmanānaṃ pahāṇyāya chaṇḍaṃ janeti…. (3) Anuppannānaṃ kusalānaṃ dhimmanānaṃ uppādāya chaṇḍaṃ janeti…. (4) Uppannānaṃ kusalānaṃ dhimmanānaṃ pahāṇyāya chaṇḍaṃ janeti…. The comys give a slightly different listing: (1) Uppannānaṃ pāpakānaṃ dhimmanānaṃ pahāṇyāya vāyamo (the effort to discard evil states that have arisen); (2) Anuppannānaṃ pāpakānaṃ dhimmanānaṃ anuppādāya vāyamo (the effort to prevent the arising of unarisen evil states); (3) Anuppannānaṃ kusalānaṃ dhimmanānaṃ uppādāya vāyamo (the effort to cultivate the arising of unarisen wholesome states); (4) Uppannānaṃ kusalānaṃ dhimmanānaṃ bhiyāya, bhāvāya vāyamo (the effort to discard evil states that have arisen) (eg Abhs 7.6 = Abhs:SR 179 = Abhs:BRS 279). The first two efforts are inverted in each case.
(3) The 4 bases of spiritual success

Furthermore, Udāyī, I have taught my disciples the way: my disciples who practise the way cultivate the four bases of spiritual success [power] (cattāro iddhi, pāda).

(1) Here, Udāyī, a monk cultivates the base of spiritual success, complete with concentration through zeal [desire to act] (chanda) and through determined endeavour.

(2) He cultivates the base of spiritual success, complete with concentration through effort (viriya) and through determined endeavour.

(3) He cultivates the bases of spiritual success, complete with concentration through mind (citta) and through determined endeavour.

(4) He cultivates the base of spiritual success, complete with concentration through investigation (vīmamsā) and through determined endeavour.

And in this way, many of my disciples dwell having attained to the perfection that is the peak of superknowledge.

(4) The 5 spiritual faculties

Furthermore, Udāyī, I have taught my disciples the way: my disciples who practise the way cultivate the five spiritual faculties (pañc’indriya).

(1) Here, Udāyī, a monk cultivates the spiritual faculty of faith (saddh’indriya) that leads to inner peace that leads to self-awakening.

(2) He cultivates the spiritual faculty of effort (viriya’indriya) that leads to inner peace, that leads to self-awakening.

(3) He cultivates the spiritual faculty of mindfulness (sat’indriya) that leads to inner peace, that leads to self-awakening.

(4) He cultivates the spiritual faculty of concentration (samādh’indriya) that leads to inner peace, that leads to self-awakening.

(5) He cultivates the spiritual faculty of wisdom (paññ’indriya) that leads to inner peace, that leads to self-awakening.

And in this way, many of my disciples dwell having attained to the perfection that is the peak of superknowledge.

(5) The 5 powers

Furthermore, Udāyi, I have taught my disciples the way: my disciples who practise the way cultivate the five powers (pañca bala).

(1) Here, Udāyī, a monk cultivates the spiritual power of faith (saddhā bala) that leads to inner peace, that leads to self-awakening.

(2) He cultivates the spiritual power of effort (viriya bala) that leads to inner peace, that leads to self-awakening.

(3) He cultivates the spiritual power of mindfulness (sati bala) that leads to inner peace, that leads to self-awakening.

(4) He cultivates the spiritual power of concentration (samādhi bala) that leads to inner peace, that leads to self-awakening.

30 Explained in Iddhī, pāda Sānīyutta (S 5:268 f). Other references: D 2:213 f, 3:77, 221; M 1:103, 2:11; S 4:365, 5:254-293 passim; A 1:39, 297, 2:256, 3:81 f, 4:464; Vbh 216; Pm 1:111, 113, 2:205. On a simpler level, these four bases of spiritual success power can be paraphrased as: (1) will power; (2) effort or energy; (3) mental focus; (4) reviewing one’s progress. These can be applied in a more worldly sense as the four bases of success (in one’s enterprises).

31 “The base of spiritual success, complete with concentration through zeal and through determined endeavour,” chanda, samādhi, padhāna, sankhāra, saṃamāgatamiddhipādani; Gethin: “the basis of success that is furnished both with concentration gained by means of desire to act, and with forces of endeavour” (2001:81). On chanda as the “desire to act”, see Gethin 2001:90 f.
(5) He cultivates the spiritual power of wisdom (pañña bala) that leads to inner peace, that leads to awakening. And in this way, many of my disciples dwell having attained to the perfection that is the peak of superknowledge.

(6) The 7 awakening-factors

20 Furthermore, Udāyi, I have taught my disciples the way: my disciples who practise the way cultivate the seven awakening-factors (satta bojjhāga).

(1) Here, Udāyi, a monk cultivates the awakening-factor of mindfulness (sati sambojjhāga) that is dependent on seclusion, dependent on fading away (of lust), dependent on cessation (of suffering), ripening in letting go (of defilements).

(2) He cultivates the awakening-factor of the investigation of states [dharma-discrimen] (dhamma,vicaya sambojjhāga) that is dependent on seclusion, dependent on fading away, dependent on cessation, ripening in letting go.

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32 The parallel between the full sāmañña,phala account of the dhyānas and the 7 bojjhāgā is striking:

sati sambojjhāga "he establishes mindfulness before him" (parimukhāni satīthi upatthevatā …)
dhamma,vicaya sambojjhāga “the monk sees that these 5 hindrances are abandoned in him; seeing that these 5 hindrances are abandoned in him,” (bhikkhu imē pañca nīvārane pañhī attani samanupassati; tass‘ ime pañca nīvārane pañhī attani samanupassato.)

(viriya sambojjhāga) [Effort is made at the sati sambojjhāga level.]
pīti sambojjhāga “gladness arises; because of gladness, zest arises; when the mind is zestful,” (pāmujujañi jayati; pamuditassa pīti jayati; pīti, manassa.)
passaddhi sambojjhāga “the body becomes tranquil; when the body is tranquil, he knows happiness” (kāyo passambhāti; passaddha,kāyo sūkhaṃ vedeti;)
samādhi sambojjhāga “when he is happy, his mind is concentrated…he enters and remains in the 1st dhyāna, accompanied by applied thought and sustained thought. Free of applied thought and sustained thought, with zest and happiness born of seclusion, he enters and remains in the 2nd dhyāna, free from applied thought and sustained thought, accompanied by zest and happiness born of concentration…” (sukhino cittaṃ samādhiyati...sa,vitakkāni sa,vicārāni viveka,jañi pīti,sukhaṃ pathamaṃ jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati...avivakkanavivacāraṃ samādhi,jañi pīti,sukhaṃ dutiya-j,jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati…)

upekkhā sambojjhāga “and he experiences happiness with the body. He enters and remains in the 3rd dhyāna, of which the noble ones declare, ‘Happily he dwells happily in equanimity and mindfulness.’... He enters and dwells in the 4th dhyāna, with mindfulness fully purified by equanimity” (sukhaḥ ca kāyena pātisānvedeti yan tām ariyā acikkhanti upekkhāko satīthi sūkha,vihārī ti tatīya-j,jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati...upekkhā,sati,pārisuddhim catuttham, j,jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati.)


33 The factors of investigation (dhamma,vicaya), effort (viriya) and zest (pīti) counteract torpor. The three factors of tranquility (passaddhi), concentration (samādhi) and equanimity (upekkhā) counteract mental agitation. Mindfulness (sati) keeps the two sets of factors in a harmonious balance. For this reason, it is placed first.

34 Here “seclusion” has special reference to the overcoming of the 5 hindrances (pañcā nīvāranā). "Fading away," virāga also “dispassion.”

35 "Cessation," nirodha, that is, “cessation of suffering”.

36 "Dependent on seclusion…ripening in letting go,” viveka,nissitam virāga,nissitam nirodha,nissitam vossagga,parināmī. On the terms here, see Gethin 2001: 165-168. MA says that there are 2 kinds of letting go or relinquishment (of suffering) (vossagga): “giving up” (pariccāga), i.e. the abandonment of defilements, and “entering into” (pakkhandana), i.e culminating in Nirvana. Gethin notes that this phrase is not uique to the 7 bojjhāgā, but is also found in connection with the factors of the noble eightfold path, the indriyā and balā (2001: 162 f). This formula shows that that each bojjhāga is to be developed successively “as dependent on seclusion, dispassion [fading away] and cessation” (Gethin 2001:166).
(3) He cultivates the awakening-factor of effort (viriya sambojjhāṅga) that is dependent on seclusion, dependent on fading away, dependent on cessation, ripening in letting go.

(4) He cultivates the awakening-factor of zest [joyful interest] (pīti sambojjhāṅga) that is dependent on seclusion, dependent on fading away, dependent on cessation, ripening in letting go.

(5) He cultivates the awakening-factor of tranquillity (passaddhi sambojjhāṅga) that is dependent on seclusion, dependent on fading away, dependent on cessation, ripening in letting go.

(6) He cultivates the awakening-factor of concentration (samādhi sambojjhāṅga) that is dependent on seclusion, dependent on fading away, dependent on cessation, ripening in letting go.

(7) He cultivates the awakening-factor of equanimity (upekkhā sambojjhāṅga) that is dependent on seclusion, dependent on fading away [of lust], dependent on cessation [of suffering], ripening in letting go [of defilements].

And in this way, many of my disciples dwell having attained to the perfection that is the peak of superknowledge.

(7) The noble eightfold path

Furthermore, Udāyi, I have taught my disciples the way: my disciples who practise the way cultivate the noble eightfold path (ariyā atthangika magga).

Here, Udāyi,

(1) a monk cultivates right view (samma diṭṭhi).
(2) He cultivates right thought (samma sankappa).
(3) He cultivates right speech (samma vācā).
(4) He cultivates right action (samma kammantā).
(5) He cultivates right livelihood (samma ājīva).
(6) He cultivates right effort (samma vāyāma).
(7) He cultivates right mindfulness (samma sati).
(8) He cultivates right concentration (samma samādhi).

And in this way, many of my disciples dwell having attained to the perfection that is the peak of superknowledge.

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38 “Dharma-discernment,” dhamma, vicaya, lit “taking apart of dhammas (mental and physical states),” also tr as “discrimination of dhammas.” Awakening does not comprise in the assemblage of then 7 factors, but just one, namely, dhamma, vicaya sambojjhāṅga (Nm 456; Miln 83; Gethin 2001:185). Both Edgerton (BHSD) & Gethin call into question the tr of vicaya here as “investigation” (Gethin 2001:152 n38). See Gethin 2001:147 f, 152-154, 185.

39 On why right view (samma diṭṭhi) comes first, see Mahā Cattārisaka S (M 117) = SD 6.10 (2004).
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