

Nourishment from the roots: Engaging with the Buddhist foundations of mindfulness

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Introduction

Over recent years, the concept of mindfulness has had a dramatic, profound impact in Western society. Not only have mindfulness-based interventions been widely embraced within Positive Psychology (PP), as attested to by the existence of this book, but by many applied professions, from education (Napoli et al., 2005) to healthcare (Fortney & Taylor, 2010). Given the detailed and wonderful contributions of the other chapters in this book, the value of mindfulness as a means to wellbeing and psychological development hardly needs to be restated here. However, what this chapter will argue is that our current understanding and appreciation of mindfulness is somewhat *limited*, and that we would have a much greater sense of its profound potential if we were to explore the original Buddhist context in which the notion of mindfulness was first developed. As will be seen here, Western psychology has latched on to one quite specific idea of mindfulness, influenced by the pioneering scholarship of Kabat-Zinn (1982). This particular version of mindfulness, centred around the development of attention and awareness, has often been presented in a de-contextualised way, separated from the wider Buddhist framework of ideas and practices in which mindfulness was originally situated and taught (Shapiro, 1994). This de-contextualisation was not necessarily a bad thing: arguably, this was what enabled mindfulness to take root and be adopted enthusiastically in predominantly secular Western societies (King, 1999). However, as valuable and worthwhile as this particular formulation of mindfulness is, the original Buddhist teachings are replete with profound, nuanced insights and teachings concerning mindfulness. Now that mindfulness *has* been widely accepted within academia, and the West generally, we might benefit from *re*-contextualising it.

This then is what the present chapter aims to do: to re-contextualise mindfulness by considering the deeper Buddhist roots of the concept, thus enabling PP to still further harness the revolutionary power of this practice. This re-contextualisation will necessarily be partial and incomplete: over its 2,500 year history, Buddhism has flowered into numerous traditions, each with their own teachings and interpretations; as such, one can only hope to cover a small portion of this immense wealth of insight. In this light, the approach taken here is to consider three ‘types’ of mindfulness within Buddhist teachings (as interpreted by the contemporary Buddhist teacher Sangharakshita (1998), who is introduced in an endnoteⁱ). This idea that there are different ‘types’ of mindfulness is based on the identification of three Pali¹ words in the canonical Buddhist teachings that are all conceptually related to awareness: *sati* (awareness of the present moment); *appamada* (awareness infused with a spirit of ethical care); and *sampajañña* (awareness infused with a sense of spiritual progress). As readers may perhaps recognise, most contemporary conceptualisations of mindfulness are generally based on the

¹ Pāli is an Indo-Aryan language that was indigenous to the Indian subcontinent when Buddhist scriptures were first recorded in writing around the first century BCE, and still serves as the canonical language of Buddhism. All terms here will be written in the text in Pali, and will generally be defined on first usage.

first type of mindfulness, *sati*. As valuable as ‘*sati*-type’ mindfulness is, this chapter will argue that we have much to gain from also embracing and encouraging the other two types also. As such, this chapter will be in three parts, exploring the three ‘types’ in turn. In each case, we will consider how PP could profit from considering and promoting this ‘type’ of mindfulness.

Sati: Awareness of the present moment

We begin here with *sati*, since the term ‘mindfulness’ was derived explicitly from this Pali word. Thus, our first point of exploration here is to consider how *sati* gave rise to the modern notion of ‘mindfulness.’ Such considerations fit in to an emergent debate in the psychological literature around the term ‘mindfulness,’ and its adequacy as a translation of concepts in the original Buddhist teachings (McCown et al., 2010). This is a debate about exegesis and hermeneutics (i.e., how we interpret original texts), and about translation and discursive equivalence (i.e., how we capture the nuanced meanings of the original terms in our choice of English words). The rendering of *sati* as ‘mindfulness’ was first accomplished by the pioneering Buddhist scholar T. W. Rhys Davids, in 1881, who was responsible for many of the initial translations of Buddhist teachings into English. So, in what context is the word *sati* used in these original texts. The term appears frequently throughout. Arguably the most prominent and influential teaching relating to *sati* in the Pali canon is the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, the ‘Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness’ (Bodhi, 2011). Its guidance states: ‘Establishing present-moment recollection right where you are, simply breathe in, simply aware, then breathe out, simply aware. Breathing in long, know directly *I am breathing in long...* [etc.]’ Readers might be familiar with this teaching as the basis for the ‘mindfulness of breathing,’ a foundational practice within contemporary mindfulness interventions, such as Kabat-Zinn’s (1982) Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction programme (MBSR). Readers may further recognise the phrase ‘present-moment recollection’ in the *sutta* as the roots for Kabat-Zinn’s (2003, p.145) own influential definition of mindfulness as ‘the awareness that arises through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment.’ However, the word ‘recollection’ in the *sutta* is noteworthy. As Peacock (2014, p.5) explains, in the Brahmanical tradition of India – the cultural context in which the Buddha was born and lived (circa the 5th Century BCE; Coningham et al., in press) – the word *sati* had connotations of ‘remembrance’ and ‘recollection.’ Within a Buddhist context, this did not mean historical memory per se, but rather ‘recollecting’ or ‘remembering’ the activity that one is currently engaged in. As Anālayo (2003, p.48) puts it, this means bringing to mind ‘what is otherwise too easily forgotten: the present moment.’

This type of mindfulness is incredibly important and worth cultivating. The point of this chapter is not to denigrate *sati*-type mindfulness, but just to suggest that PP (and of course people generally) could benefit by augmenting it with the two other forms of mindfulness discussed here too. Before discussing why such augmentation might be useful, let’s first remind ourselves why *sati*-mindfulness – which is the basis for all contemporary mindfulness-based interventions – is so valuable. We do not need to go into great detail here; after all, this entire book is dedicated to showcasing the manifold ways in which *sati*-mindfulness, and positive psychology interventions (PPIs) that engender this, are conducive to wellbeing. The early, pioneering, mindfulness-based interventions were developed primarily within medicine and clinical psychology; these showed that *sati*-mindfulness (i.e., attending to the present-moment in a non-judgmental way) is helpful in alleviating physical and mental health problems, from chronic pain (Kabat-Zinn, 1982) and fibromyalgia (Kaplan et al., 1993) to depression (Teasdale et al., 2000) and anxiety (Miller et al., 1995). Over recent years, to this growing corpus of interventions have been added others that are more recognisable as PPIs – i.e., rather than

alleviating illness or dysfunction, they proactively promote the kind of 'positive' outcomes in which PP specialises. Such mindfulness-based PPIs include interventions focusing specifically on engendering qualities ranging from forgiveness (Recine et al., 2009) and gratitude (McIntosh, 2007) to resilience (Meiklejohn et al., 2012) and spirituality (Goldstein, 2007). The development of such interventions is very much to be welcomed, and many more PPIs based on engendering *sati*-type mindfulness will hopefully be developed over the years ahead.

However, many people participate in such interventions without engaging with the wider Buddhist teachings in which mindfulness was first developed. This is of course fine! No-one should feel any duty to engage with Buddhism, and as emphasised above, many people find great benefits from practising mindfulness on its own terms, without reference to Buddhism. That said, one could argue that people would find even greater benefits if they were to explore these Buddhist teachings. This includes, in the context of this chapter, engaging with the other 'types' of mindfulness, namely *appamada*-mindfulness (with its emphasis on ethical awareness and practice) and *sampajañña*-mindfulness (with its emphasis on spiritual development). This is not to say that people practising *sati*-mindfulness will not necessarily be acting ethically or developing spiritually. However, deliberately cultivating these other two types of mindfulness could help *enhance* their ethical behaviour and *accelerate* their spiritual development, thus engendering greater wellbeing. (The question of *why* ethics and spiritual development are important to wellbeing will be addressed in the two sections below.) As Kabat-Zinn himself acknowledges, by taking mindfulness out of its original Buddhist context, and conceptualising it using cognitive theories of attention, there is the risk that 'Western psychology may wind up denaturing it in fundamental ways,' and that there is 'the potential for something priceless to be lost' (Williams & Kabat-Zinn, 2011, p.4).

Moreover, without explicitly cultivating ethical and spiritual awareness, there is the possibility of mindfulness being deployed in problematic ways. As Stanley (2012, p.202) notes, while teachings in the Pali canon preserved an ethical dimension to *sati*, when taken out of this context and conceptualised purely as an attention training technique, then there is the risk of mindfulness 'becoming de-ethicised.' Some of the ways in which mindfulness interventions have been utilised are arguably reflective of this 'de-ethicised' process. For instance, mindfulness-based mind fitness training has been developed for military personnel as a stress-prevention tool (Stanley et al., 2011). Now, let me emphasise that this intervention has the noble aim of addressing the severe mental health risks that soldiers are liable to, and as such is to be welcomed. However, it is nevertheless also the case that one aim of this intervention is to help military personnel operate more effectively in combat situations, which inevitably includes acts of killing. While this does not necessarily render the use of mindfulness *un*-ethical, it can be recognised at the least that this is a morally tricky area. This is not necessarily just a modern issue: meditative techniques have been harnessed in military contexts previously in history, as reflected by the martial arts and warrior traditions within Buddhism, such as the samurai 'Warrior Zen' of 16–17th Century feudal Japan (Johnson, 2000, p.9). Nevertheless, even if these cases are exceptions, they show that mindfulness *can* be deployed in a de-contextualised way, for instance just as an attention training technique, without necessarily any reference to ethical or spiritual development.

Moreover, the contention that interventions can be utilised without reference to ethics is a charge that might also be applied to PP more generally, which on the whole has been wary of being prescriptive around ethics (Sundararajan, 2005). For instance, in '*Authentic Happiness*,' Seligman (2002) characterises the 'good life' as the gratification one obtains from utilising one's 'signature strengths.' However, he suggests that PP cannot be prescriptive over *how* people find

such gratification, since PP is a science, and as such should aim for the idea of value neutrality. He illustrates this with the challenging example of ‘a hit man who derives enormous gratification from stalking and slaying’ (p.303). Asking rhetorically whether this person could be deemed to have achieved ‘the good life,’ Seligman states: ‘The answer is yes. I condemn their actions, of course, but on grounds independent of the theory in this book.’ That is, while Seligman naturally finds such actions abhorrent, he argues that this condemnation cannot be made *within the context of his theory*, since this theory is ‘not a morality or a world-view’ but a scientific theory, and as such should be ‘morally neutral.’ This is a respectable argument, and is certainly in keeping with the objective spirit of scientific enquiry. (Although that said, some theorists suggest that every viewpoint is inextricably made from a ‘moral horizon’ (Taylor, 1989); for instance, paradoxically, even the scientific ideal of value-neutrality *is itself* a value choice, one which values ‘objectivity’ over explicit moral commitments.) Nevertheless, the next section will argue that PP would do well to explicitly incorporate reflections on ethics into its theorising. In a sense, this would be a radical departure for a scientific discipline; however, as the next section will explore, from a Buddhist perspective, incorporating ethics into theories of wellbeing is valuable and indeed necessary, because acting ethically (or otherwise) has a strong determining impact on wellbeing.

Appamada: Awareness infused with a spirit of ethical care

Having extolled the virtues of *sati*-mindfulness above, this section makes the case that people would further benefit from engaging with the Buddhist teachings in which the concept of mindfulness was first developed. Interestingly, research on converts to Buddhism in Western countries suggest that many people do indeed go on this journey of discovery – from utilising mindfulness in a de-contextualised ‘secular’ way, to then being intrigued by the broader and potentially more far-reaching possibilities for wellbeing offered by Buddhism. For example, qualitative interviews with meditators in London revealed that although most initially just took up meditation as a stress-management technique (Lomas et al., 2013), nearly all subsequently became interested in the wider Buddhist context of meditation (Lomas et al., 2014b), and many went on to become practising Buddhist to some extent (Lomas et al., 2014a). So, what relevance to such Buddhist teachings hold for PP? This second section focuses on one particular element – a second ‘type’ of mindfulness found in the Pali canon, namely *appamada*. (That said, while we are labelling this a ‘type’ of mindfulness, it is perhaps best not to see *appamada* as distinct from *sati*-mindfulness: rather than a separate state of mind, *appamada* might be best seen as a quality with which one might try to imbue *sati* (Peacock, 2014). Thus, one would seek to develop one’s mindfulness into an enhanced form encompassing both *sati* and *appamada*). So, what qualities does *appamada* bring to mindfulness. One way of ascertaining these is to consider the diverse range of English words into which the term has been translated. These include ‘earnestness’ (Müller, 1881), ‘vigilant care’ (Soeng, 2006), ‘unremitting alertness’ (Thera, 1941), ‘diligence’ (Peacock, 2014), and ‘carefulness’ (Nikaya, 2008). From the perspective of Sangharakshita’s interpretation of Buddhism, which underpins this chapter, perhaps the best translation is ‘moral watchfulness’ (Rao, 2007, p.69). This translation reflects the commentary on the Dhammapada (the collection of sayings attributed to the Buddha), which describes it as ‘awareness... with regard to the sphere of qualities of good conduct’ (Carter, 2005). As such, we might view *appamada* as ‘awareness infused with a spirit of ethical care.’ Thus, the overriding significance of *appamada* is that it introduces an *ethical* dimension to mindfulness practice; this takes the concept of mindfulness beyond just being aware of what is happening (i.e., *sati*), and explicitly connects it to Buddhist teachings on ethics and morality.

In this section, we shall consider two questions: what, from a Buddhist perspective, does ethical behaviour consist of; and why, from the perspective of PP, do ethics *matter*? However, before considering these, let us briefly clarify what ethics are, and how they differ from two closely related concepts: values and morals. Values are not necessarily about right/wrong, but are ‘conceptions of the desirable’ that motivate behaviour and life choices (Schwartz, 1999, p.24). In contrast, morals *are* explicitly about ‘notions of right and wrong’ (Hazard Jr, 1994, p.451). However, there is often a close relationship between values and morals: values held in common in a society often *become* the basis for a commonly-held moral framework. As for ethics, while morals may be unarticulated or implicit, ethics refers to the explicit codification of such morals in a communally defined and recognised framework. So, firstly, what does Buddhism say about ethics. One central teaching in Buddhism is that one can attain liberation from suffering by following the ‘Noble Eightfold path’; this is a prescription for ‘right living,’ including wisdom (right vision and conception), ethical conduct (right speech, conduct, and livelihood), and meditation (right effort, mindfulness, and concentration) (Thrangu, 1993). Thus, three strands of this path are explicitly about ethics: right speech (*sammā-vācā*), right action (*sammā-kammanta*), and right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*). Elaborating on these strands, the teachings offer various lists of precepts, specifying in more detail what these consist of. The most widely known set is the ‘five precepts’ (*pañca-sīla*), which recommend abstinence from: harming living beings; taking the not given (i.e., theft); misconduct concerning sense pleasures (e.g., sexual misconduct); false speech (i.e., lying); and unmindful states related to consumption of alcohol or drugs. For more committed Buddhists, these five are supplemented by additional recommendations in lists of eight and ten precepts (e.g., featuring prescriptions around eating). At a far more detailed level, the Monastic Disciplinary Code (*pāṭimokkha*) features around two hundred rules for monastic life (Keown, 2009). In addition to these prescriptions are various exhortations to virtuous living in the literature. For example, in the Theravada tradition, there is an emphasis on four ‘*brahma-viharas*’ (‘divine’ qualities): loving-kindness (*mettā*); compassion (*karuṇā*); sympathetic joy (*muditā*); and equanimity (*upekkha*).

Now, our second question in this section is why, from the perspective of PP, does ethical behaviour matter? Essentially, Buddhist teachings hold that ‘skilful’ (i.e., ethical) actions should be pursued because they will generate future positive states of mind (i.e., wellbeing), whereas ‘unskilful’ (i.e., unethical) actions should be avoided because they will lead to future negative states of mind. This reasoning is underpinned by a key Buddhist teaching: *paṭiccasamuppāda*, i.e., the ‘law of conditionality.’ This teaching is absolutely central: expressed by the Buddha on attaining enlightenment, it may even be described as *the* fundamental insight of Buddhism, upon which all others rest (Kang, 2009). Essentially, this teaching refers to the causal operation of the universe, i.e., the general principle of ordered relationship between conditions and their effects. As expressed by the Buddha: ‘This being, that is; from the arising of this, that arises... This being not, that is not; from the cessation of this, that ceases’ (Kang, 2009, p.72). This is the central insight that underpins all other Buddhist teaching, the ‘meta’ law that substantiates all other laws. For example, the Noble Eightfold path is a manifestation of this more fundamental notion of *paṭiccasamuppāda* (in this case, that following the path will lead to liberation). Understanding the truth of this teaching is seen as *the* key to wellbeing and ultimately liberation from suffering. As Sangharakshita and Subhuti (2013, p.49) put it, ‘once we have understood and are fully convinced about the nature of reality as *paṭiccasamuppāda*, we align ourselves with those regularities or laws that lead us to liberation.’

From this law of *paṭiccasamuppāda* is derived the understanding of the importance of ethical behaviour. This importance is understood through the notion of *karma*. However, it is

important to emphasise that karma is just one aspect of this more general law of conditionality. Although the word *karma* has entered Western discourse, there are many misunderstandings around it, including the notion that it means that *everything* that happens to you is the result of past actions. However, in Buddhism, analysis of the law of conditionality is rather more subtle. One such analysis has been the identification of five different ‘orders’ of conditionality, referred to as the fivefold ‘*niyāma*.’ In Keown’s (2003) Dictionary of Buddhism, *niyāma* are defined as ‘laws, conditions or constraints that govern processes or phenomena.’ It is worth noting that the Buddha himself is not recorded as presenting these *together* as a fivefold list, rather just mentioning them individually in separate teachings; this model of a collective fivefold *niyāma* only occurred in the 5th Century C.E. in the influential commentaries of Buddhaghosa (Jones, 2012). Essentially, his commentaries recognize five different domains of life that are subject to law-like principles. Firstly, *utu-niyāma* is the ‘law of the seasons’: this pertains to the observable cyclical regularity of environmental phenomena (e.g., seasonal and diurnal patterns); viewed anachronistically through our contemporary scientific understanding, we could regard this as the domain of physical laws, like the law of gravity. Secondly, *bīja-niyāma* is the ‘law of seeds’: this refers to observable patterns in the realm of organic matter, like reproductive continuity; again, anachronistically, this would be the domain of bio-chemistry, featuring principles such as the genetic inheritance of phenotypes. Thirdly, *citta-niyāma* is the ‘law of the mind’: this refers to psychological processes, such as patterns and causes of mental events; we could see this as the domain of psychology. Fourth, and most crucially in the context of this section, is *kamma-niyāma*, the law of *kamma* (or *karma*, to give it its more commonly used Sanskrit name). This encompasses the general idea that actions in the world tend to have consequences; as expressed by Buddhaghosa, this refers to ‘the desirable and undesirable results following good and bad action.’ As indicated above, this aspect of conditionality is the domain of ethics and morality. Finally, the *dhamma-niyāma* is the ‘law of nature’; while this is a somewhat esoteric notion, one could regard it as referring to the potential of the universe to develop complex qualities such as consciousness, and to produce exemplary beings like the Buddha. From the perspective of a modern scientific understanding, we might associate this law with the theory of evolution, and particularly with emergentist philosophies (e.g., Aurobindo, 1939-1940; Wilber, 1995) which view the universe as evolving *towards* complex outcomes such as self-consciousness.

The nuance provided by this list of fivefold *niyāma* is that things happen for all kinds of reasons, some of which are connected to people’s actions (*karma niyāma*), and some of which are not (the other four *niyāma*). However, it also states that while not everything is caused by one’s past actions, every action will nevertheless cause an outcome in the future. So, to bring the discussion back to the central theme of this chapter, *appamada*-mindfulness means becoming aware and appreciative of the *karma niyāma*, and of the fundamental notion that actions have consequences. It is important to differentiate *karma* from other religious teachings relating to ethics; for instance, Christian notions of sin suggest that we are punished *for* our sins through divine retribution (Swinburne, 1989). However, the Buddhist notion of *karma* does not involve a supernatural agency, but simply proposes that we are rewarded or punished, in a causal sense, *by* our actions. As expressed by Kang (2009, p.73), ‘the law of karma states that any volitional action rooted in non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion (or in positive terms: generosity, love/compassion, and wisdom) gives rise to virtuous or positive imprints in the mind that would subsequently result in experiences of happiness and pleasure.’ Conversely, ‘any ethical action rooted in greed, hatred or delusion gives rise to their opposite non-virtuous/negative mental imprints that later result in experiences of suffering and displeasure.’ Given this law, Buddhist teachings state that ethical actions are not only beneficial to other people, but have

direct benefits for the actor themselves; so, people have a vested interest in acting ethically, and should be motivated to act as such. As Kang (2009, p.73) puts it, 'a behavioural guideline that emerges from such an ethical view of causality is that one ought to engage mindfully in positive karma rooted in positive volitions.'

Thus, *appamada* introduces a further dimension to mindfulness that is not present in *sati*-mindfulness alone: this goes beyond simply being aware of our thoughts, feelings and actions, but involves reflecting on whether our actions are 'skilful' (i.e., in tune with the ethical precepts). *Appamada* also involves 'tracing the origins of your mental states helps you to discover more about their background, so that you can make adjustments to the way you live your life' (Sangharakshita, 2003, p.94). This type of ethical reflection and appreciation is simply not found in contemporary conceptualisations of mindfulness, founded as these are on the concept of *sati*, with its emphasis just on attention. In modern mindfulness-based interventions, if people experience negative cognitions or feelings, they are encouraged to attend to these, and to ideally decentre from them. Of course, this type of mental response is very effective, and is to be encouraged; as emphasised above, interventions involving this kind of attention training can have a potent impact on wellbeing. However, what such interventions do *not* do is make any causal connection between any such negative qualia and people's actions outside of meditation practice. This is an omission, an example of Kabat-Zinn's fear of something 'priceless' being lost (Williams & Kabat-Zinn, 2011, p.4). That is, although it is useful to learn how to decentre from negative thoughts – the prerogative of many mindfulness-interventions – a potentially more powerful solution would be to help people to learn to live skilfully (i.e., ethically), thus lessening the likelihood of negative qualia emerging in the first place. It is this type of ethical appreciation that is developed with the cultivation of *appamada*-mindfulness. As such, the implication of this for PP is that we would do well to develop PPIs that explicitly encourage mindfulness of – and engagement *in* – ethical behaviour. This need not be seen as a radical departure from what is already happening. After all, we already have interventions promoting prosocial qualities such as forgiveness (Lin et al., 2004), compassion (Fredrickson et al., 2008) and kindness (Buchanan & Bardi, 2010). However, there is room for PP to be far more explicit about the value of acting ethically, and to explore the notion of ethical practice through a far more systematic process of empirical and theoretical enquiry.

Sampajañña: Awareness infused with a sense of spiritual progress

Finally, we shall touch upon a third 'type' of mindfulness, *sampajañña*, which we might define as awareness infused with a sense of spiritual progress. By including this here, we are suggesting that, as valuable as *sati* and *appamada* are, we can augment mindfulness still further, cultivating an even more powerful approach to wellbeing. As with *appamada*, it is better not to regard this as a distinct 'type' of mindfulness, separate from the others, but a new quality that one can bring to mindfulness, thus creating a compound of *sati-appamada-sampajañña* mindfulness. So, what qualities or abilities are implied by the word *sampajañña*? Some scholars interpret it as the ability to 'effortlessly' sustain *sati*. For example, the influential 8th Century (C.E) Indian teacher Śāntideva (2002) states that '*Samprajanya* [i.e., *sampajañña*] comes and, once come, does not go again, if *smṛti* [i.e., *sati*] stands guard at the door of the mind.' Maharaj (2013, p.67) interprets this as meaning that the 'assiduous practice of *sati*... culminates eventually in the achievement of *samprajanya*, which seems to be a more spontaneous and effortless state of watchfulness of the body and mind.' Beyond this idea of 'effortless' mindfulness, many writers associate the term *sampajañña* specifically with *insight*. For instance, in the seminal teaching on mindfulness, the *Satipaṭṭhāna sutta*, there is a refrain of *ātāpi sampajāno satimā*, which Bodhi (2011) translates as 'ardent, clearly comprehending, and mindful.' Thus the refrain encompasses three

mental factors: *atapi* (ardent) refers to energy to engage in practice; *sati* is watchful awareness; and *sampajāno* (an adjective relating to the noun *sampajañña*) concerns clear comprehension.

So, what type of insight does *sampajañña* imply? Sangharakshita's (2003) interpretation is that *sampajañña* fundamentally means having an appreciation of the possibility of spiritual development. Thus, Sangharakshita argues that *sampajañña* might best be translated as 'mindfulness of purpose,' in the sense that 'everything we do should be done with a sense of the direction we want to move in and of whether or not our current action will take us in that direction' (p.13). This kind of awareness supersedes *appamada*-mindfulness; the latter simply means appreciating the value of living ethically, which one could potentially do in a secular, conventional way (as indeed many people do); however, *sampajañña*-mindfulness involves taking on the profound, revolutionary possibility of spiritual development, and pursuing this goal accordingly. Arguably, this is the overarching 'point' of Buddhism: ultimately, all teachings are about helping people overcome suffering and make progress towards liberation. One way to consider the type of awareness constituted by *sampajañña* is in terms of *paṭiccasamuppādi*, i.e., the law of conditionality introduced above. In particular, Sangharakshita (2003) suggests that *sampajañña* is associated with awareness of the final *niyāma*, the *dhamma niyāma*. This is referred to as the 'law of nature,' which can be interpreted as the potential of the universe to develop complex qualities such as consciousness and exemplary living beings like the Buddha. From this perspective, with the emergence and cultivation of *sampajañña*, one would develop a deep appreciation of the *dhamma-niyāma*, and its implications. One such implication is the idea that all living beings have the potential to become Buddhas, and that the way to progress towards this is by following a spiritual path. So, just as *appamada* would entail an appreciation of the value of living ethically, *sampajañña* would inherently mean being convinced of the value and indeed necessity of diligently following such a path. This awareness would inextricably guide and structure our behaviours, such that we would evaluate and choose all our actions according to whether they facilitated our progress along this path (Sangharakshita, 2003).

There are many ways in which spiritual development is conceptualised in Buddhist teachings, with various nuanced stage-wise depictions of the path. Within the *Tipitaka* (early Buddhist canonical texts), Bucknell (1984) identifies six different lists of stages. The first of these is arguably the most prominent, namely, the Noble Eightfold Path, introduced above. A second ten-fold stage-wise schema adds two further stages to the end of the eightfold path: right insight (*samma-nana*) and right liberation (*samma-vimutti*). Other lists identified by Bucknell feature different sequences of stages, which are often greater in number (as many as 16 in one instance). Further stage-wise models were also developed throughout Buddhism's long history of evolution. For example, the Sarvāstivāda school, which emerged around 240 BCE following a schism within the Theravādan tradition (King, 1995) propounded a Five Path Schema, involving five stages (Chong, 2009). Firstly, the foundational path of accumulation (*sambhara-mārga*) involves building up 'merits' (i.e., 'good karma') through three primary practices: giving (*dana*), moral observance (*sila*), and the cultivation of meditation (*bhavana*). Secondly, the path of preparatory effort (*prayoga-marga*) involves deepening meditative practices, with an initial phase (*mokabhagiya*) of basic practices (*samatha* and *vipassana*), then more advanced practices (*nirvedhabhagiya*). The third stage, the path of seeing (*darsana-marga*), involves 'direct comprehension' (*abhisamaya*) of Buddhist insights into the nature of reality. Fourth comes the path of transformation (*bhavana-marga*); certain aspects of suffering cannot be extinguished by insight (the third stage), but only by further cultivation of the mind during this more advanced fourth stage. The final stage is the path of the non-trainee/no more learning (*asaika-marga*), in which the practitioner achieves enlightenment and final liberation from suffering.

This Five Path schema has been reworked by Sangharakshita (1998) into 'four stages of deepening practice': integration; positive emotion; spiritual death; and spiritual rebirth. The stage of integration involves 'recognising oneself as a moral agent and intentionally, cultivating ever-more skilful actions of body, speech and mind, so that progressively more satisfying, subtle, flexible, and open states of consciousness emerge as their fruit' (Sangharakshita & Subhuti, 2013, p.128). In this sense, one would take one's first steps along the spiritual path with the cultivation of *appamada*. The sense of integration is produced by: (a) understanding the connections between one's subjective experiences (e.g., in mindfulness practice) and one's actions; and (b) integrating one's actions with one's values (e.g., Buddhist precepts). This stage is followed by 'positive emotions'; this builds upon the previous stage through the 'systematic cultivation of skilful intentions and actions that bring the karmic fruit of a more finely tuned mind' (Sangharakshita & Subhuti, 2013, p.133). Subsequently, more advanced practitioners might enter the stage of spiritual death. This involves developing deep insight into the nature of existence; in particular, according to Buddhism, this means appreciating the three *lakshanas* (i.e., 'marks of conditioned existence'): *anicca* (impermanence); *anattā* (insubstantiality), and *dukkha* (suffering). This teaching is central to Buddhism, and describes the fundamental nature of reality: all phenomena are empty of a fixed, enduring, independent nature, but are transitory (*anicca*) and interdependent (*anattā*); denial or ignorance of these fundamental truths, and the consequent attempt to attach to phenomena that are inherently subject to change, is thus seen as causing suffering (*dukkha*). Spiritual death occurs when these insights are realised with respect to one's own self, and one understands the impermanence and insubstantiality of one's being. Thus, 'dying' here means giving up our 'self-oriented clinging' (Sangharakshita & Subhuti, 2013, p.133). However, this is not nihilistic annihilation, but the precursor to the final stage of the path, a liberating spiritual rebirth. This involves re-birth into a deeper sense of self, one that is coterminous with the *dhamma niyāma*, with the spiritual path itself. Here, Sangharakshita and Subhuti suggest that one's own egoic concerns dissipate, and one connects 'more and more deeply with *dhamma niyāma* processes' (p.134). At the culmination of this fourth stage (which in the Five Paths schema is a stage in its own right), there is no longer a 'self' that is making progress, but just the *dhamma niyāma* playing itself out through the medium of the person; this is the omega state of spiritual development, sometimes referred to as enlightenment.

Conclusion

From an orthodox scientific perspective, these ideas – particularly esoteric notions like 'liberation' and 'enlightenment' – might sound challenging. However, it must be emphasised that such Buddhist teachings are not the product of abstract theorising and philosophising, but are the result of empirical observation of the developmental states of mind achieved through meditation, and the systematic structural mapping of these observations (Wilber et al., 1986). Nevertheless, even if we regard these teachings as speculative (which I would strongly argue that we should *not*), at the very least this is territory that is of interest to PP, one which scholars might endeavour to explore and test out according to their preferred methodological protocols. The notion of adaptive psychological and/or spiritual development is central to PP, from Maslow's (1943) pioneering hierarchy of needs, to Ryff's (1989) model of Psychological Wellbeing. As valuable as such theories are though, PP has much to gain from exploring actual practical activities that can engender such growth. It is the contention here that mindfulness can be one such facilitator of psycho-spiritual development. However, this chapter has also argued that many contemporary mindfulness-based interventions are based on a rather narrow understanding of mindfulness, one derived from the pali term *sati*, centred on present moment awareness. It has been suggested here that people may be able to attain more far-reaching and

profound states of wellbeing by engaging with other forms of mindfulness. These include being aware of one's actions and experiences in the light of ethical considerations (*appamada*), and in the context of the pursuit of spiritual development (*sampajañña*). PP has much to gain from exploring these deeper, more radical, forms of mindfulness in the years ahead.

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ⁱ Sangharakshita is one of the foremost contemporary interpreters of Buddhism in the West. Born in London in 1925 as Dennis Lingwood, after serving in India during the Second World War, he stayed on to pursue an interest in Buddhism, studying under revered Buddhist masters (recounted in Sangharakshita, 1997). He was ordained within the Theravada tradition in 1950, whereupon he received the honorific 'dharma name' Ugyen Sangharakshita, a Pali term meaning 'Protector of the Sangha.' He returned to England in 1964, and founded the monastic Western Buddhist Order (WBO) in 1967, together with the more inclusive Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (FWBO). In 2010 the movement changed its name to the Triratna Buddhist Order/Community; 'Triratna' is a Sanskrit term meaning the 'three jewels,' i.e., the triad of Buddha (teacher), *dharma* (teachings) and *sangha* (community) to which members are said to turn for 'refuge' (i.e. commit to) at their ordination. The Triratna is one of the main forms that Buddhism has taken in the West, with around 80 centres/groups in the UK (Bluck, 2006). It

is somewhat unorthodox, since it does not exclusively identify with one antecedent Asian Buddhist tradition. Instead, Sangharakshita has chosen practical and doctrinal elements from various traditions, aiming to convey a 'core of common material,' constituting the 'essence' of Buddhism, which may be optimally 'relevant' to the 'West (Subhuti, 1994). For example, the Triratna's two core meditative practices – the mindfulness of breathing and the metta bhavana – are derived from the early Theravada tradition. However, the movement also uses rituals (pujas) from the Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions, such as a 'seven-fold puja' based on the Bodhicaryavatara by Śāntideva (2002), a teaching on the 'Way of the Bodhisattva' from the 8th Century C.E. (Batchelor, 1987).