

FOUR FOUNDATIONS OF MINDFULNESS

The Sathipatthana Sutta (MN 10)

Mindfulness:

1. bare attention
2. (clear comprehension of context/purpose)

I. Mindfulness of the Body

1. *mindfulness of breathing.*
qualities (in breath or out-breath? fast or slow? harsh? soft? labored?)
arising and passing away
2. *mindfulness of the four elements*
Earth – solidity, weight, hardness, softness, pressure
Air – vibration, stillness
Water – cohesion, what keeps things flowing together
Fire – heat or coolness (calorific content)
3. *other body contemplations: postures, body parts, corpses*

II. Mindfulness of Feelings (Vedana)

1. *pleasant*
2. *unpleasant*
3. *neutral*

III. Mindfulness of Mind States

1. *moods, emotions*
2. *overall states of mind* (e.g., concentrated vs. unconcentrated)

IV. Mindfulness of Mental Objects (dhammas)

- = *mindfulness of the Buddha's insights as they manifest in our lives*
four noble truths
five hindrances
three characteristics (impermanence, non-self, unsatisfactoriness)
etc.

Example

- 1st Foundation: "I have a sharp sensation in my knee." (*body*)
- 2nd Foundation: "It's unpleasant." (*feeling*)
- 3rd Foundation: "It's a bummer that I have this pain in my knee." (*mind state*)
- 4th Foundation: "This is suffering!" (Observing First Noble Truth in *mental object*)