

## Freed Freedom.

A FRUITFUL CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN  
AN UPASIKA  
AND  
A MEDITATION MASTER.

(Readers ,who tend to become curious about the identity of the upasika whose progress in meditation is revealed in these pages are kindly requested to respect her anonymity.)

MITIRIGALA NISSARANA VANAYA

Mitirigala

Sri Lanka.

1986.

## Theri Gatha.

Adhigatamidam bahuhi  
Amatamajjapica labhaniyamidam  
Yo yoniso payunjati

Na ca sakka aghatamanena

Sumedha Theri  
(Theri gatha)

Many have won THIS- the DEATHLESS  
And still today it can be won  
If with wise endeavour one perseveres  
But not if one is averse to endeavour!

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## PREFACE

The Buddha's discourse on the four foundations of mindfulness – The Maha Sattipatthana sutta- is remarkable in that it opens with an initial assurance and concludes with a final guarantee. The assurance is that they constitute a Path that goes One Way – and One Way Only – and that is to the purification of beings, to the surmounting of sorrow and lamentation, to the disappearance of pain and grief , to the attainment of the true way, to the realization of Nibbana . The guarantee is that if anyone were to develop them at most, for seven years or at least for seven days, one of the two fruits could be expected for him : either Final Knowledge here and now or , if there is a trace of clinging left, Non – return .

Unlike in the heyday of Buddhism , the significance of these two striking features of the discourse are not fully appreciated by many who take up this practice of Satipatthana today. For them, it is only a half – hearted pre-school training for attainments in some Buddha Sasana to come – a mere preference to be credited to some future account .Hence if someone rediscovered the relevance of the Buddha's assurance and guarantee even to the

present day by treading the Path in earnest , it will indeed serve as some heartening news to many.

The 'Upasika' whose devotion to the practice of Satipatthana forms – as it were – the central theme of this work, is one such rare witness to the validity of the Buddha's assurance and guarantee. Though born in a non-Buddhist family, she developed such a profound interest in meditation that she found the need to re-assess her convictions in the light of Buddhist scriptures. She discovered her first 'Kalyanamitta' in her own household assistant who gave her the first lessons in Anapanasati. It was in her early seventies that she found her next 'kalyanamitta' and guide, in the Meditation Master of Mitirigala Nissarana Vanaya. From then onwards, it was for her a fully devoted and whole-hearted endeavour to attain the Highest. As to how she attained what she attained in seven years of striving amidst household chores, maternal duties and infirmities of old age, her letters themselves will bear testimony.

inspiring as her letters are, we have some hesitation in placing them before the public at large- and this for two reasons. Firstly, there is a section of public opinion which looks down on such publications, casting serious imputations upon the persons concerned. This attitude is very often prompted by either puritanism or obscurantism. Secondly, there are the risks involved in publicity, in the case of a meditator. Charlatans as well as the over-enthusiastic will flock in, in their hundreds out of cheap curiosity, with little or no regard for a meditator's love for solitude.

It might be disappointing for some readers, therefore, to find that we have kept her identity anonymous. But they are at full liberty to discover the secrets of her success through her own writings and for that, we may offer some clues too – perseverance, humility, obedience, and gratitude.

Mitirigala Nissarana Vanaya

Mitirigala

September 1986

### Letter No 1

Mithirigala Nissarana Vanaya

3/5/79

Dear Dayika,

The Venarable Nayaka Thero has received your letter of 30th April and has instructed me to send you a reply.

Regarding your problem in Anapanasati meditation, he is of the opinion that the peculiar feeling experienced by you (ie. Inflation like aballoon) may also be caused by unwittingly following the in breaths too far into the body. The calming down of breath sometimes results in such situations as you had come across in trying to trace the breath at the nose-tip. So he advises you not to be alarmed when the breath is not felt, rather, you should calmly maintain your attention at the normal place of attention at the nose-tip, until the breath becomes tangible again. There is no need to worry about the beginning, the middle and the end, in such situations. When the breath cannot be traced even after waiting for it at the nose-tip for a considerable time, he says, you may visualize your sitting posture or attend to any point of touch as you are sitting( with the mental note: touching, touching) Then there is a possibility that after a while you will again come to feel the breath at the nose tip.

The Venerable Nayaka Thero also asked me to inform you that it would be better if you could send your meditation problems next time in Sinhala. He hopes that perhaps your friends who accompanied you here, would be able to help you in this connection.

With metta

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[Letter No 2](#)

M. N. V.

15/8/81

Dear Dayika,

My teacher, the Venerable Maha Thero, is in receipt of your letter of the 8th instant. Regarding your problems in meditation, he offers the advice that you should proceed with your anapanasati meditation along the same lines as before. Even the light now appearing must be treated as any other object coming up (menhikaranawa) The attention should always be on the Anapana Nimitta (sign) If you become aware of the whole body while meditating, it may be attended to, for deepening of insight. In general, the aim should be the development of your concentration.

The peculiar experience you had mentioned is not of much significance, according to the Venerable Maha Thero.

As to your expression of thanks and gratitude to him, he wants me to mention that the honour should rightly be dedicated to the Buddha, to whom one owes all this.

With metta

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[Letter No 3](#)

5/1/83

Most Honored & Revered Sir,

This is to send all my good wishes to you and your pupils at the Hermitage for the coming year. We all hope that you are in good health, and now the weather has improved. I continue my meditation as usual although I think I am able to bring the flash (like lightning) in the heart to combine with the breath – I do not think I have succeeded in stopping the process at a precise moment of time ( for example after 20 minutes).

But there arises a short inhalation of breath ( which occurs periodically) which breaks the even process.

I find the “flashes” now rising along the back of the neck and through the head and reaching almost the central top of the head. I hope this is alright.

My car is badly broken up with old age (22years) and I shall have to get it mended before I come to Mitirigala....

With many many thanks for all you have done to help me on the spiritual Path.

Your grateful Pupil.

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[Letter No 4](#)

M.N.V.

8/1/83

Received the letter of 5.1.83 and the Venerable Nayaka Thero wanted me to inform the following:-

Allow inhalation and exhalation to continue as usual without taking any effort to enter that flash into the mind. Allow both to go on. If any thing happens effortlessly allow that to happen but do not do things forcefully. That is why the breath is renewed periodically. If at

any time the mind enters the light like object, then that is quite alright. But do not do it forcefully.

With metta

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Letter No 5

11/1/83

Most Rev. and Honoured Sir,

I thank you again for guiding me on this High Path of Sensitive Balance. I think now I understand. The effort must not out-weigh calm and relaxation – (The Balance has to be found.)

The “catch of the breath” I wrote to you about always happens during the first hour of meditation- then as the mind and body relax ,there comes a rest and calm as of a perfect sleep and yet the mind is aware. It appears on the point of losing consciousness, but does not.

I must describe an experience I had on the 7th of January between 2a.m. and 4 a.m.

I had reached the point of calm previously described, when my daughter, who was sleeping in the adjoining room coughed rather loudly. By then I seemed to have left my body and was just looking at it. At the same time I was linked to this body by feeling every atom of it pulsating- when I heard the sound of the cough all the atoms in the body blew upwards like a firework in the sky and then came down again to normal.

I also felt my mind being attacked by a thought from the sub-conscious but I was able to arrest this, and to hold on to being still and watchful. This is the first time I have had such a clear experience of this sort- of being highly alert and viewing the body calmly like another person watching, and yet being aware of the feelings of the body being watched.

Please forgive me for troubling you but this is a new experience. I would like confirmation as to whether I am on the right tract.

I have also to say that troubles pour in ceaselessly on every side, but I am able to attend to them, and then return to the peace of mind which is a wonderful blessing- I never had the capacity to do this earlier.

With all good wishes and thoughts for 1983-

Your humble and grateful pupil whom you have guided and helped so much.

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Letter No 6

M.N.V.

22/1/83

Namo Buddhaya!,

I read and understood the long letter. I expect that by now what happens during the first hour of meditation ( as was mentioned in the letter) has ceased to occur. The reason is, that disturbances created as a result of “ the mindfulness of breathing” meditation, would appear in various ways. They would occur in the effort of inhalation and exhalation too. As a result of that defect the effort for inhalation and exhalation happens as if automatically.

Therefore it is necessary to be vigilant in it. At instances of this nature there would be happiness, lightness of the body and mind, a faith in meditation, joy and energy. To each of these the mind must be focused and awareness with understanding has to be maintained.

(2) Most meditators experience this. Some say that when walking their bodies are seen to be beside them in their “cakamana” (meditation walk). Now it has been clearly seen that the body and mind are two and not one. These are called the understanding of mind and corporeality (Nama –rupa) or Purity of Understanding (ditti Visuddhi). At such times when they are in that manner, they should be reflected. Reflection should not be done as “ my

corporality” or as “ my rupa” but as “ this corporeality which was attached and connected” or as “ this rupa which was attached and connected”. In other words it should be reflected as only “ a corporeality” “ a corporeality” or “ a rupa, a rupa”

Now meditation seems to have developed much. It should not be allowed to stay like this for a long time. Continue meditation little by little and carefully.

Contentment is close at hand.

May the blessings of the Noble Triple Gem be with you always.

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**Letter No 7**

28/1/83

Most Honourable & Venerable Sir,

I thank you very much for the instructive help received. I have now overcome the “catch in the breath” and the “flash” and the breathing goes smoothly.

I shall endeavour now to be more aware of “ happiness, lightness of body, joy and energy” as they come in meditation and reflect further on them.

There has been one more experience during meditation – I had reached a calm state when 3 bangs hit on the top of my head. These blows come from within the skull- I had felt these faintly earlier- with these bangs I seemed to get out of the rupa and to expand in all directions like air; and this time there was no connection, or attachment or feeling to the rupa. I felt I had become air and melted into the existing air. I also had certain physical symptoms which are better now. (1) A dull ache on the top of my head. (2) An unusual feeling at the back of the eyes as well as in the whole eye. (3) A lot of mucous gets dislodged from the upper palate ( at back of eyes and nose and finds its way into the throat.)

It seems a number of new occurrences are taking place in quick succession. If alright, I shall continue with joy.

I hope very much your Reverence is in good health. If there is anything I can do or send please may I know. It would make me very happy if I could be helpful in any way.

With every good wish,

Your grateful pupil

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**Letter No 8**

10/2/83

Most Honoured & Revered Sir,

I write this with joy as I think the “ content ” you spoke of in your last letter is now near. I have followed your instructions of allowing the breath and the flash to link up but without undue effort. At the same time to reflect on joy, happiness, lightness of body and mind, energy and faith in meditation.

Following these instructions in meditation there was the following experience:-

The particles of the rupa which used to feel like an inner body of mist, became different. The particles were filled with a new power so strong, that the body felt lifted off the bed I was meditating on. I was filled with “happiness and joy”

When I arose from meditation the whole body felt strengthened. After 2 further days of meditation, the rupa disappeared altogether and was replaced by this power of force.

The boundaries of the rupa vanished and there was left (1) A center of power which spread outward (2) Clear awareness (3) Great joy (4) contentment of mind which followed after the meditation was over.

Now all forms of anxiety and worry in everyday life are greatly reduced. They cannot impinge on my mind. There is also a splendid feeling of well being and energy. I think this state is the one you referred to as "contentment" and so shall continue to follow these instructions. If there is anything further I should do, please may I know. If not I shall continue as I am doing now.

With all my gratitude and thanks and my good wishes and the hope your Highness remains in good health.

Your humble and obedient pupil

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**Letter No 9**

20/6/83

Most Revered & Honoured Sir,

I write to humbly ask if I may come to see you- on any day convenient for you between the 25th and 30th of June about 8.45 in the morning.

I have been practicing the meditation according to your instructions and have recently had 2 unusual experiences which I would like to place before you.

Experience (1) Has to do with the complete disappearance of the Ego. There was only an awareness of boundless happiness- and more near to my heart, a profound Peace-

Experience (2) I had never seen light during meditation before- but 5 days ago, I saw dramatically , a revolving wheel of white light in the center of my forehead during meditation. It was about 3 or 4 inches in diameter and very powerful.

I shall be very grateful if I may speak to you about these 2 matters. Please could I come one day convenient to you.

With all good wishes and with all hope you are in excellent health.

Your grateful and humble pupil.

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**Letter No 10**

M.N.V.

22.6.83

Received the letter dated 20.6.83. The Ven. Loku Hamuduruwo wants me to inform you to meet him on any day between the 27th and 30th of June at 8.45 a.m. He also said that as one progresses in meditation lights are usually seen, and also that these experiences could be discussed further when the meeting takes place.

May the blessings of the Noble Triple Gem be with you always. May your Dhamma aspirations be fulfilled!

With metta

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**Letter No 11**

M.N.V

19/7/83

Received the letter of the 9th instant. Ven. Loku Hamuduruwo wants me to inform the following.

"Love" is a very strong word of the world. It always accompanies desire. E.g. Love for a child etc. It is through the separation of the desire aspect from "love" and to wish in terms of ' without mental worries and physical worries may they be well and happy', that it is possible to transform the mundane metta to super mundane level, I.e. a metta beyond the world of craving. The desire aspect which is attached to love becomes ferocious and begins to

torture the object it loves. It is when this desire is in action that it begins to do harm.

Accordingly said the Blessed One\_

“ Tanhaya Jayati soko  
Tahaya jayati bhayan  
Tanhaya vippamuttassa  
Natthi soko kuto bhayan”.

From desire arises grief  
From desire arises sorrow  
If one is freed from desire  
Then there would be no grief:  
What would there be to fear?

What is necessary at first is a straightforward development in concentration without external hopes. When concentration ( Samadhi) develops the true nature of objects would be revealed. When their true nature is seen, then the mind would understand ‘ Sunyata’ .As this is the way it ought to be, one should not run after ‘sunyata’ seeking for it. ‘Sunyata’ should be allowed to come by itself naturally, as an automatic process.

To do metta is good. Better is Karuna( compassion or sympathy). To be equanimous (upekkha ) is the best.

When the three doors ‘sita , kaya, vacana’ ( mind, body and speech) are made to function along with the subduing of desire, conceit and wrong views (tanha, mana ditthi) , then parami would naturally accumulate. We are glad that this view has arisen in your mind.

Wish you would continue in your progress.

May you be able very soon to break asunder the bond of craving in all its aspects and rise out of the world in the wake of the Enlightened!

With metta

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**Letter No 12**

M.N.V.

7/1/84

Ven. Nayaka Maha Thero instructs you as follows, in reply to your letter dated 4.1.84. The 3 experiences you’ve stated should be considered separately.

(1)

It shows an improvement but you’ve to develop further. The revolving nature and the disappearance of the light are both natural.

(2)

This is a significant development. It shows that you’ve begun to experience the arising and passing away of phenomena. This will lead you to the Insight Knowledge of Impermanence of all conditioned things. Let it develop further, but in a very natural manner. Don’t force things.

(3)

This is nothing. It only shows that you’ve gained concentration of mind. In such states of mind, the slightest sound gets enlarged and may even seem to stay on ( stilled) . You must contemplate when you hear a sound , as “sound” or “hearing”.

May your attempts succeed in realizing the truth!

In Metta

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### Letter No 13

14/1/84

Most Revered and Honoured Sir,

I thank you very much for the instructions you have so kindly sent me. I shall try to follow them to the best of my ability.

There is however one point which I should like to place before your Highness with regard to the amplified sound I spoke of. For some time past, I have been aware of different types of sound.

(1) A sound of a hum.

(2) The sound of silvery church bells ringing and sometimes these run together to form a line of sound.

(3) A number of different sounds all merging together. I hear these at different times and they go away after a while.

But this last experience of sound was completely different. It rose in an instant of time and shot up into the air where it spread all over the sky and space like the top of a mushroom and vanished also in an instant. This "instantaneousness" was the characteristic which made it different to all previous experiences of sound.

It was more like the previous experience of sight which I had earlier. So I have an idea that the light in my forehead and the sound (I almost seemed to see) may be connected in some way. Am I wrong in my assessment I wonder.

I enclose an envelope in case there is any further direction that I should follow. If not, I shall proceed as your Highness has directed.

With good wishes as always,

You humble pupil

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### Letter No 14

M.N.V.

20/1/84

Received the letter sent to the Ven. Loku Hamuduruwo. This reply is sent on his instructions. "The light emanating from the forehead should be considered as connected with the present meditation.

Thought it is so, as it too is a result of a cause, the inherent tendency is for it too to come to an end.

The lastly mentioned 'sound' seems to be some thing especially to be considered, because many things had happened in a very short time. That sound should be carefully considered to find out whether it was a sound that really occurred at that time or whether it was a perception which had taken place previously in the mind.

There is a tendency for sounds which had occurred in the mind preciously to come up when the mind is concentrated in this way. There is a tendency for things embedded in the mind to rise up. At most times one may hear sounds with meaningful words as if they are said at that moment. Things of this nature happen when the mind is concentrated.

What ever it is, it is quite clear that "sound" is impermanent. Here it should be understood that 'sound' as well as every thing is impermanent. This is a good experience to understand that every thing is impermanent. One should make it a habit to view all objects that are met by the 6 senses namely: the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body and the

mind as impermanent, and the attachments and the aversions connected with the objects that are met by the 6 sense doors also should be got rid of or put aside. There are without our knowledge, embedded in the mind, habitual attachments, which have to be understood. One should make it a habit to understand these experiences so that as a result no attachments or aversions would arise in the mind with regards to them.

Now it is clear that a strong concentration is developing in you. So lastly I have to say that meditation should be continued without disrupting this development in concentration that is growing.

### Letter No 15

8/4/84

Venerable & Revered Sir,

I write to wish you all the best for this Aluth Avurudda. Although I have not come to the Arannya for sometime, the qualities you represent are stamped in my mind and seem to guide me impersonally. This is a major force which guides and inspires me, together with a range of spiritual books, meditation and a drive towards helping others. This last is the source of joy. To give up self for others. In your last letter you instructed me to contemplate joy, faith in meditation, lightness of body and mind and energy.

My work on this Path has led to a marked change in my personality. (1) My quick temper is more and more under control. As I learn to “understand “ in a back ground of Karuna (compassion) the undesirable qualities fall away. (2) I find myself less attached which ensures peace of mind.

In the vision I saw during meditation body , mind and ego disappeared into a boundless shimmering expanse. So then it would be foolish to cling to things which change. I seek the changeless ever keeping this vision in mind- and pin my tanha to this search with equanimity of mind and energy ( a pair of opposites which have to merge). Then one begins to see and know clearly and directly. (intuitively) with Patience and Humility I shall attempt to pursue this tremendous Path, leading to some part recognition of that which is true. The quest of the Nivan Dhatu which lives in everyone and is every where.

Again, I thank your Highness for the unparalleled help given to me . Each day, I see more clearly what I have to do. It is now a question of “doing” with unflinching determination. Eternal gratitude and thanks to my Master.

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### Letter No 16

M.N.V.

30/5/84

When 5 internal powers called Panca – Bala come to maturity through meditation, that leaves a forceful impression on the mind, the effect of which lasts long. The 5 Powers are Saddha (faith built upon correct understanding), Sati (mindfulness) , Viriya ( mental energy), Samadhi (concentration) , and Panna (wisdom). When they are weak within, the mental impressions fade away quickly.

Even though a powerful experience seems to last longer, you must contemplate that too as impermanent. Nothing in our mind –body structure remains static , even for a split

second. Everything is in a constant flux of changing. As such, you must not attach yourself to any thing that happens in meditation, but be mindful with a keen probing awareness and then let go of every thing.

You must make one subject of meditation (like Anapana) your base or primary meditation and use the other meditations to supplement it, so that not only Bojjhargas or the 8 fold-path, but all 37 limbs of Enlightenment (ie. Bodhipakkiya Dhammas) would be developed simultaneously. (But the 8 fold – path is supreme among them.)

I am happy over your progress, but you should not be content with it yourself because indulging in happiness is harmful for further progress.

As to my health, the general weakness in the body, due to old age, bothers me more than the eye-sight. But that is the nature of this impermanent body, so let it be. As a result, I don't go out anywhere now, and spending the Vassa in Colombo is completely out of question.

Wish you success in your noble attempt to gain deliverance!

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P.S.

The B.P.S. , Kandy , had published recently a book on the Noble 8 fold-path, written by Bhikku Bodhi. Reading this might help you.

### Letter No 17

9/8/84

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.....( one leaf of the letter is missing.).....

Remain unchanging – no more ups and downs and therefore calmness will be its nature an unchanging equanimity. I wonder if I have understood the general principle correctly, but this is how it seems to me.

I have had 2 further experiences-

(1) Once during meditation when I saw in front of me a sheet of pale pink light – on it were 2 or 3 revolving blue wheel like shapes. When it faded away, I was left in a state of restfulness and great calm.

(2) This was not during meditation – I was talking to 3 others when my entire body became electrified – Then I did not wish to talk but withdrew into myself – Gradually the thrilling ceased and again I had attained the same calmness I had experienced during the earlier meditation – I think this was a state of Samadhi as my hands seemed glued together as during a good meditation. But this is the first time it has happened outside meditation. At this time both body and mind seem to vanish ( or rather my awareness of them) but I think there is a faint awareness of in and out breathing.

I now work on the 4 types of meditation,(1) Anapana ( as the principle meditation) and (2) Metta, (3) Vipassana – (traversing the entire body with the mind) and (4) sakman Bhavana.

I would like to have a more detailed understanding of Anapana Sati – especially the 4th stage and wonder if there is some book which would be helpful- The noble 8 fold Path by Ven. Bodhi has been very useful.

I hope your Highness keeps in good health-  
with all my gratitude and thanks for the great kindness always shown to me.  
Your humble and obedient pupil.

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Sakman = Cankamana ( walking meditation)

**Letter No 18**

M.N.V.

14/8/84

Here are the instructions given by the Maha Thero in reply to your letter dated 9.8.84.

Regarding your understanding of the Path to Freedom, one has to suppress the defilements in the mind, cultivating the Bodhi pakkhiya Dhamma instead. Then the mind becomes purified and right understanding (wisdom) dawns. Further on, the five Powers (ie. Confidence, mindfulness, energy, concentration and wisdom) unify together upon a common object; Nibbana is realized. At that moment, all 37 Bodhipakkhiya Dhammas converge, four Noble Truths are realized and part of the defilement is eradicated completely, never to rise again. This has to occur on four occasions, each time more powerfully and cutting down more defilements. Complete Freedom from the defilements, thus the unchanging equanimity is attained at the fourth stage.

Regarding your experience during the meditation, it is a common thing. When such experiences occur in meditation, you must contemplate and let them pass. Don't try to analyze. But the other experience which occurred outside meditation is rather important. At such instances, you must give up every thing else and focus on meditation, letting the experience develop.

Now it is high time that you begin vipassana on a full scale, based on anapana. Concentrate on the touch at the place where the breath touches either the nose-tip or the upper lip. At the same time, try to understand the great primaries ( ie .Maha Bhuta) in the breathing. The sensation of movement is the Vayo – dhatu ( wind element); sensation of touch is the pathavi – dhatu (earth element) sensation of hotness is the Thejo Dhatu(heat element) ; while the Apo-dhatu ( water element) cannot be sensed but has to be understood as the element which binds together the earth element from dispersing. If in the meantime, the mind diverts to a bodily sensation, contemplate on it and return to Anapana. Same procedure in the case of hearing, seeing , smelling, tasting and thinking. Whatever object that comes through a sense-door and ..... has to be brought back to breathing. For a complete set of instructions on the method of contemplation, see "Practical Insight meditation" Ven. Mahasi Sayado ( the B.P.S. Kandy) but substitute anapana in place of the movement of abdomen.

It is not clear what you mean by the 4 stage of Anapana ( is it in the order given in the Satipatthana sutta?) There are a number of books published on Anapana, but those published by B.P.S. kandy are better. In addition read "Anapana-Sati-Bhavana by Ven. N. Ariyadhamma ("Vision House " Colombo 4.) I may recommend the following books for general reading:

" Heart of Buddhist Meditation" (Nanaponika Thero)

"The power of Mindfulness mediation" ( Nanaponika Thero)

"The Experience of Insight ( Joseph Goldsein)  
"The Path of Purification (Visuddhi Magga" Translated by Nanamoli Thero)  
" The Progress of Insight" ( Mahasi Sayadaw Thero)  
"What the Buddha taught" (Ven. Rahula)  
"Buddhism in Daily Life (Nina Van Gorkom)  
"Abhidhamma in Daily Life (Nina Van Gorkom)  
"Wheel" series and other books published by the B.P.S Kandy.  
"Books written by Ledi Sayadaw, Ven Ajhan Chah, Narada Thero, Piyadassi Thero.  
May you succeed in your noble endeavor to attain Deliverance !  
On the permission given by the Teacher,

.....  
P.S. How do you perform Walking Meditation? What do you experience then? (specific instructions are given in Ven. Mahasi's books.

### Letter No 19

22/8/84

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

I thank you very much indeed for the letter of instructions- I have got together nearly all the books recommended and have commenced the study of them. I have 12 books in all. There are 2 questions you asked me in your letter.

- (1) How do you perform Walking Meditation?
  - (2) and what do you experience then?
- Section (1) I walk in 3 sections.

(1) slow walking thinking- " Now left foot , now right". This section gets me into a right mental attitude when the mind gets focused on the feel of the foot contacting the ground. As I proceed the molecules (Kalapa) of the foot seems to cling to the ground.

Section (2) Left foot lift and down- then right foot lift and down . A tingling sensation is felt along the lower limbs from foot to waist and then over the body. (except neck and head).

Recently, however, this feeling of electrical tingling or vibration has been very forceful and now covers my head and neck. In fact now this sensation goes direct to my neck, ears and head and I feel nothing in the body. My attention is drawn to the head and is held there. I feel the energy level has been raised.

Section (3) Left foot lift forward down  
Right foot lift, forward down.

At this stage I automatically seem to adjust the energy to a balance level and I am aware of an equanimity and an inclination to stand still and enjoy the feeling of rest and peace, which follow, while mind and body seem stilled- but I seem aware of the breathing.

I think it is the same experience of samadhi(?) that I have during meditation proper-but then I seem unaware of the breath and again, I think it was the same experience I had while talking to a group of 4 people. ( I wrote to you about it earlier).

My mind is I think very fixed now on the Dhamma all the time, ( both by day and night) and even during intervals in conversation on other subjects, my mind seems to come back to

the Dhamma.(the remembrance is perpetually in my mind). And this is the great help I get to over-come and get across the unending problems and difficulties I am ever faced with.

But now I am no longer worried or harassed- nor am I angered or afraid - with the Dhamma as support , I quietly think and do my best and accept the result for better or worse, with a certain degree of understanding and patience. I also realize by these experiences, that it is this same understanding and equanimity which now has to be cultivated to higher levels.

I shall try to do my best with the gracious help and encouragement You Highness has always extended to me.

You humble, happy and obedient pupil.

.....

P.S. I enclose a self addressed envelope in case there is anything further I should see to or do.

### Letter No 20

M.N.V.

25/8/84

Your progress seems to be encouraging, but there are some aspects you have to develop further. Now concentrate fully on Vipassana as instructed in the earlier letter(doing Metta in-between is quite O.K.)

The understanding of the mind and body (ie. Nama and rupa), should develop gradually in vipassana. Firstly the materiality(ie. rupa) has to be well discerned. The base of all matter comprise of the four Primary Elements(ie. Maha Bhuta) called Pathavi or earth element or the characteristic of hardness or softness), Apo ( element of liquidity or cohesion) Tejo (element of fire of temperature) and vayo (element of wind of motion or distension) refer to Visuddhi Magga.( Path of Purification) for details. These should be clear in breathing, in walking and in every bodily action. If you take breathing for an example, the movement you feel is vayo dhatu, the solidity or roughness you experience is Pathavi dhatu, the heat you feel in the breath is tejo dhatu. Apo dhatu cannot be experienced directly but has to be understood as the characteristic of binding together the earth element.All these types are invariably present in each minute particle of matter, but density may vary according to each type of matter (e.g.. in the breath, vayo is prominent while in fire tejo is dominant).

In walking meditation too, you must be aware of these primary characteristics. when lifting the foot, tejo is dominant, helped by vayo, while the other two are less active. In moving forward, vayo takes the lead helped by tejo, other two being dormant, when putting the foot down, pathavi takes over , helped by apo, other two lagging behind.

The three techniques of walking should be practiced in a progressive manner. Firstly, just "left and right" and you must concentrate not only upon the respective foot, but upon the entire section of the body, from head to the feet.(ie. " left side of the body" then right side of the body") When that technique has been mastered, you should proceed to the next stage of contemplating upon lifting and putting of each foot, still being aware of the entire side of the body. Thirdly " lifting, moving forward, putting down" method has to be followed. So understanding would ripen gradually.

If the mind is being distracted by some other object while walking, stop walking and contemplate upon that object until it subsides. It is also advisable to stop walking when you feel anything unusual and concentrate upon the whole body, taking anapana as the base. If you feel any happiness or peace do not indulge in it, but simply contemplate it as another impermanent phenomena. A cardinal principle in vipassana is: don't attach to any state of mind: because attachment (desire) is a defilement that would hinder the progress.

When you seem to lose perception of body and mind, try to go (sweep) over the entire body mentally and if you happen to feel any part of the body contemplate on it. Also try to find out any touch sensation upon the body and if there is any, concentrate on it. If breathing is clear, dwell upon that. If nothing else fails to evoke perception, just be aware of the mind (ie. the knowing faculty). Even the mind does not exist? That is a remarkable achievement and we will discuss that later!

The books I recommended may have slight discrepancies on some matters but they may be very helpful in forming a good understanding of Dhamma from different view points. Take "Visuddhi Magga" as the authority: the most comprehensive, unparalleled work on Buddhist Meditation.

As directed by the Ven. Teacher,

.....  
[Letter No 21](#)

30.8.84

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

Thank you once more for the excellent guide lines which I shall try to follow closely. I have not got the visuddhimagga but I shall try to borrow it from a friend.

With regards to the "mind and body being stilled" what I mean is that the body becomes quiet and motionless (at a certain point during meditation, or even while seated listening to others talk etc.) The mind likewise becomes quiet and motionless. It does not think or move anywhere, but is aware of this peace which can only occur if the mind is still. (I do not really know but these are my thoughts). If the mind moves the peace is broken. So the mind has to be sustained in this motionless balanced position. Despite all this, I seem aware of the breath which has become delicate in quality and unlike the heavier normal breath.

This is the only way I can describe this latest development.

Thanking your Highness for every thing so clearly and kindly explained to me. I shall try to continue to work as well as I can.

Your humble and obedient pupil,

.....  
[Letter No 22](#)

Revered and Honoured Sir,

I wonder how you are in your general health and eye sight? I hope every thing is alright and that when I write that I am not troubling you. According to the instructions sent by you, I have been studying the elements Pathavi, Apo, Thejo Vayo- also the 5 Nivaranas, the 7

Bojjhanga Principles, the 8 fold Path, 4 efforts- Anapana and the 16 divisions of Satipattana. Now I have them worked out, I must study them more deeply.

This morning's meditation commenced at 4 a.m. After about an hour the feeling of electrical rain started- throughout the body and I turned my attention over to this keeping in mind Apo, Tejo, Vayo and Pathavi.

Next I let go of every thing according to instructions received and I found myself very relaxed- but my mind though relaxed was very alert.

Next I felt every particle in the body dissolving- the letting go brought this about I think. The Kalapas seemed no longer tightly bound together but dissolved like salt in water. (I had often seen this experience in books, but now I have experienced it actually) Then the awareness of Peace and well being was left with me.

It is now evening and I still carry this feeling of joyful well being as my mind constantly goes back to the experience.

Earlier about 8 months(?) ago, I had a similar experience , but then I saw a boundless ocean into which my body and mind had vanished leaving me with the awareness of the oneness of existence. This time, having concentrated earlier on the 4 elements, I was aware of a more distinct dissolving and knowledge of what was happening. The end results were similar, Joy and Peace which cannot be described.

I shall continue trying to further my understanding, and trying to over come the 5 hindrances, with the 7 Bojjhargas, and increasing Mindfulness with anapana, and cultivating Metta and Karuna.

your grateful and obedient Pupil.

.....

P.S.

But always, whatever Joy and Peace accrued from meditation, I must keep in mind that it is impermanent; and never attach this mind or body to anything conditioned.

### Letter No 23

M.N.V.  
11/9/84

The Ven. Maha Thero is pleased about your progress. You have experienced 'anicca' (impermanence) in full, but don't rest now to enjoy the peace derived. The real peace is Nibbana, so don't relax till you experience that. You are on the Path now and keep on going forward.

You've mentioned about 'Kalapas'. A rupa -Kalapa is the most basic form of existence of matter. Each Kalapa ( meaning 'bundle': group) contains the four great elements plus colour, odour, taste and nutritive essence. When the 'bare-octad' is combined with the life faculty and the 'body sensitivity' , the 'body decad' is formed, which is the base for the body sense, spread

in and out the body. Similarly, the bare octad combines with the life faculty and eye-sensitivity, to produce the eye-decad, the base of the eye sense. If your understanding is keen enough, you may experience the characteristics of most types of matter. (But don't force yourself in this respect. Let the understanding grow naturally. Sometimes the mental and physical elements experienced may not be expressible in words, but it does not matter.)

wish you all the success!

.....

### Letter No 24

17/9/84

Most Revered and Honoured Sir,

Thank you very much for your letter of instruction regarding the Kalapas and the good news it contained for me. I am very happy and shall continue to work as diligently as I am able, as I have striven always to do. How to express my thanks however leaves me speechless (I have never been much good at this - always felt tongue-tied) - without your guidance I could have done but little - I thank you with all my heart for everything bestowed on me.

Another experience I have had during meditation - I had reached the state of peacefulness where both mind and body seemed stilled and I was aware of peace. But realized that it was marred by an awareness of very light breathing -

I saw a more perfect level of peace just beyond - but to reach it I had to give up breathing ( which was a disturbance) I did not know how this could be achieved -

An element of fear ( of death i think ) seemed to rise up -

I wonder what I should do?

From your faithful, grateful and humble pupil.

.....

### Letter No 25

M.N.V.

25/9/84

Reference your letter dated 17/9/84, the wanting to get rid of breathing entirely, which is called 'bodily formation' (Kaya-sankhara in Pali) is a healthy sign. But this should be unmixed with desire. In 'dhamma' (the teaching), this pure form of wanting is called 'Chanda'(Zeal) which can be developed to the degree of an Iddhipada ( Basis for success' or Road to power' ), a powerful tool with which the Path to Nibbana can be cleared out.

But let the breathing take its natural course. Perhaps it may disappear altogether at times and may re-appear later. Develop equanimity towards every phenomenon. Concentrate on the unending arising and passing of every physical and mental formation. Deepen the understanding that there is no self or soul amongst any one of them. All Nama and Rupa are 'anicca' (impermanent) because they constantly arise and pass away, leaving behind nothing. And that very impermanence is 'dukkha' (suffering) because it is a nuisance, a harassment, a burden, an utterly meaningless process. And that very process is 'anatta' (ego-less) because it doesn't have any everlasting substance, a permanent soul nor does it have any thing belonging to a permanent -self existing elsewhere either.

Your fear maybe a result of not comprehending this 'anatta' characteristic fully. Perhaps you may feel afraid to let go of everything, including the notion of 'self' to which you have been attached dearly for so long. Investigate with courage, the cause for the fear and eliminate the cause. For, all formations (sankhara) are but links in a chain of cause and effect. And the aim of vipassana is to understand fully the cause and eradicating it, thus eliminating the effect automatically.

In addition, you must develop confidence (saddha) in the Buddha and the Dhamma in order to counter attack such fears. By now you know the validity of the Path you have taken so far. So you can place your full faith upon Dhamma, that the rest of the Path would lead you safely to Perfect Peace. At the same time, you may feel quite confident and thankful towards the Buddha also, because it was He who first discovered this Path, attained Perfect Enlightenment, then proclaimed it to the world in great compassion. The Sanga are those Noble ones who followed the Dhamma as taught by the Buddha and became enlightened themselves. So now, you are also treading upon the same path, following the footsteps of the Noble Sangha, depending upon the teachings of the Omniscient Buddha. As such, it is but truly fitting that you place your total confidence, upon the Three Gems, and by doing it, in fact by offering your very life to the Three Noble gems, you will be able to draw such courage that all fears and anxieties would simply dissolve.

Thus you will be a true inheritor of the refuge of the 3 Gems.

Don't worry over the death. It is natural: unavoidable. In fact, every moment, all elements in our body and mind will die off. If we can use this feeble life to attain the "Deathless", what else do we expect out of this existence? One really has to give up everything in order to achieve the Perfect Peace because there, it is nothing but the Beautiful - Everlasting - All -enveloping - PEACE!

May you succeed in achieving that Noble goal in this very life!

.....

### Letter No 26

30/9.84

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

In your last letter it was said " Investigate with courage and eliminate the cause ---- for the aim of Vipassana is to understand fully the cause and to eradicate it, thus eliminating the effect automatically".

(1) After my experience and (2) my letter to you, (3) but before I received your reply - I had set about trying to discern the root of my fear and it was clear I was afraid to die - But why? I knew well that everything led only to suffering. Why and from where did this fear arise - It did not seem to me an intellectual fear as my mind was stilled in meditation - but some thing with a deeper root. As earlier instinct prominent within had taken over - Could this be at the anusaya level?

Now I have to purify myself from the 10 fetters with purposeful practice of the 7 factors of enlightenment keeping in mind the constant and progressive understanding of Annatta. I have to disentangle myself from the 2 intermingling processes of mind and body ( which lead only to Dukka and Rebirth ) by abandoning the asavas, (particularly for becoming ) and also have an understanding of the powerful and compelling energy of upadana.

This Upadana seems to me in some way similar to the compelling force which operates in the form of fear, when i am faced with the abandoning of breathing during meditation.

Above are the thoughts which came into my mind as I tried to analyze my fear - But now I have your letter which I shall set to study and absorb and try to fulfill to the best of my ability. I think I have to reflect deeply on Faith, Courage and Bava Tanha and Anatta.

With my deep gratitude and thanks for this detailed plan for my development.

Your humble and devoted pupil.

.....

### Letter No 27

M.N.V.

7/10/84

You are correct if you understand that your fear comes out of a deeper source. That source is none other than the "attavada - Upadana ( clinging to a notion of 'I') which has taken root very firmly due to accumulated ignorance in the beginning-less samsaric journey. When you perceive 'anicca' in actuality within you, you become frightened as to the fate of this imaginary 'I'. You don't want to let go of this delusion, but as you realize that everything is but anicca, you get disturbed over the continuity of this 'I'. This could well be the cause for your fear.

If this is the case, then you must try to grasp 'anatta' more and more. Contemplate upon each bodily and mental activity and be sure that what exist in reality are only different kinds of element. There are 'Nama' (mental elements like consciousness, feeling, perception, lust, fear, wisdom intention etc.) and 'Rupa' ( Physical elements such as the 4 great primaries, the 5 sense bases, 5 sense objects etc.). There is nothing substantial, lasting among them. Know thoroughly for yourself that the 'I' (soul, ego, etc.) simply does not exist at all. If you grasp this well, then you would not feel afraid when you experience the constant dissolution of the body and the mind, because they are not 'I' , but mere phenomena: You would be much relieved to know that at last your ignorance had been dispelled so much.

So concentrate upon the elementary nature of the mind and body. Try to discern Nama-Rupa more and fully. Develop this stage before dwelling on the anicca in a forceful manner. Then anicca would be evident in a very natural manner.

Wishing you all the best,

.....

### Letter No 28

29/10/84

Most Revered and Honoured Sir,

I thank you deeply for the letter of instruction dated 7.10.84.: I had commenced writing a further letter a week later when the entire household went down with virus flu- our ayah for 38 years was extremely ill but at last I think all is well once more. In an earlier letter you had spoken of the necessity of Faith and I have been pondering over this as well as the question of what is breath and what is life force?

If there is complete faith, then there must be courage attached- If there is courage, then there can be no fear there. So it is this absolute faith which has to be developed - "Faith that can move mountains." So the mountainous accumulation of wrong belief over thousands of births have to be dissolved by Saddha, Viriya, Sati, Samadhi and Pragna. ( Faith, effort, Mindfulness, Concentration and Wisdom )

Is the Life Force and the breath a combination I wonder? The Life Force being the purified aspect and the breath being the Life Force plus certain impurities. How to cleanse this force - would it be by general purification of mind by right understanding etc.?

Is this purified Life Force then the Nivan Dhatu that the Buddha said resided in this 6 foot body?

I have had 2 further experiences,

(1) During meditation, the mind and body were stilled but the mind alert and aware. The breath subsided, No sound, no movement, but it seemed to have gone inwards towards the heart center - Here I felt a sort of balancing occur of a very subtle form. I had to be utterly still to create no disturbance - there was then complete stillness - ( no breathing , neither outward nor inward.) But there was an occasional "flicker" in the heart - Still more rarely this flicker would reach the head as well.

When this ended I had normalized but was aware of an unusual dryness in the throat as well, as an unusually forceful pulse beat which gradually subsided to normal.

Experience 2 : During meditation - A vivid brilliant light like a search light seemed flashed on me - I was taken aback and wondered if a thief had entered my room - Then I realized that the entire room was flooded with this bright white light - I was about to shout to my daughter in the next room to ask what all this light was about; when I opened my eyes and found everything dark. So I had seen this light with my eyes closed in meditation - This again was a massive experience, unlike the two earlier experiences of light I had seen several months ago - (1) one was a small revolving wheel of light in the center of my forehead; and (2) the 2nd experience was similar but the wheel had expanded from about 4 inches in diameter to about 20 inches in diameter.

I am studying an interesting book called "A Taste of Freedom" Ajahn Chah on the Middle Way - very clear and concise and easy to follow- It is just one thing "let go with understanding".

Now I feel better once more, after the illness we have gone through, I shall try to persevere with diligence according to the instructions given by your Highness.

With my ever grateful thanks

I remain your humble pupil,

.....

[Letter No 29](#)

M.N.V.

3/11/84

Ref. Your letter dated 29/10/84, appearance of light in various forms is just a sign of improved concentration, therefore not much importance should be given to them. Whenever a light appears you must merely contemplate it as light, without excitement or fear. But if you state exactly at what stage of meditation does the light appear, perhaps it may help the teacher to understand your progress.

The other experience is difficult to verify due to lack of more details, such as what was the state of your mind when that inner balancing was taking place? Was this balancing physical? What exactly do you mean by a 'flicker' etc (so it is always preferable that you discuss such experiences in person with the teacher, allowing him to gain more facts about certain aspects which he may think as important.) Anyway, this flickering can be a faint form of the heart-beat, which means that the breathing has still existed. Breathing can become very fine at times, unable to be felt, but may reappear again after some time.

What do you mean by "Life Force"? There is nothing everlasting within these 'five-aggregates'( Pancakhandas) Nibbana has no existence, but can be realized through Panna - a part of the Khandas. Nibbana cannot be described but had to be experienced. When you

progress along the Path, the nature of Nibbana would be more clear to you on a mundane level, before the real Nibbana Dhatu can be experienced directly at super mundane Path stage. What one has to do is to purify the mind gradually, allowing panna to grow. ( Refer "7 stages of Purification")

Saddha is of varying degrees, but it is not mere blind faith. It is confidence developing together with understanding (ie, panna), for one develops saddha in the Buddha , Dhamma and Sangha only when he really understands the qualities they represent. For example, when one realizes 'anicca' directly through his own bodily and mental processes, his saddha on that aspect of the Dhamma would be established firmly, thus in the Buddha and the Sangha as well. When developed highly, saddha becomes a force ("bala') and a controlling faculty ('indriya')

How long have you been sitting in meditation at a time? Usually one sitting should not exceed 1 1/2 hours. This period should be determined according to one's physical condition too.

Wishing you every success in this very life!

.....  
**Letter No 30**

21/2/85

Most Revered and Honoured Sir,

I write to thank you for the audience I was permitted to have with you. It has given me much to think about- the question of decision making. I often make decisions I use as guidelines, but I let circumstances have their say as well, the final outcome is a combination of these two.

The more I think of decisions (which I myself would very much wish I could make, ie. to free myself from the numerous cords which bind me hand, foot and mind to various maternal facets which i am compelled to see to ) the more I see the complications which beset me.

However once again I will try to do my best ( in the direction I should go ) as I have always tried to do during the years when you have so kindly and patiently trained me.

One aspect is clear- The responsibilities I have undertaken on behalf of my sons in Europe I must relinquish now.

I shall commence to look for some one suitable to cope with them. This will be my first step towards the direction I have to go.

Although besieged by many maternal burdens ( which used to drag me down to a point of low vitality and dismay ) Since I saw Your Highness last, a new way has opened for me - Any upsetting thought when it enters my mind ( whatever it be) I just say " Drop it" and the mind obeys. The troublesome thought vanishes instantly - My mind is left light, clear and untroubled.

This is a wonderful new blessing I can use at any time - The mind appears to obey the will - this surely must be the commencement of freedom?

From your humble and obedient and grateful pupil.

.....  
**Letter No 31**

M.N.V.

22/6/85

Dear Dayika,

My teacher, the Venerable Nayaka Thero, received your letter of 18th instant. He is glad that you have taken steps to free yourself from wordly entanglements concerning your children.

As to the two meditation experiences mentioned in your letter, he remarked that such occurrences are to be understood as signifying some progress in your meditation - but that you should not stop to interpret their exact significance. In trying to interpret, accustomed symbols and ways of thought are bound to interfere. Hence, his advice is that you should simply note them mentally and proceed with your practice. Undue attention to such chance occurrences can be an interruption to your meditation.

with metta

.....

### Letter No 32

M.N.V.

12/10/85

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero is in receipt of your letter of the 4th. He would put down your recent meditational experiences largely to the " anatta-sanna " (perception of not - self ) you have been building up. He says that the flashes in the heart region might later even spread over the whole body, and you might even feel a sensation of the disappearance of the whole body. Whatever it is, you are advised not to get excited over it but calmly to note it mentally. He also advises you to strengthen the power of concentration ( samadhi ) . He expressed appreciation about your devotion to meditation by cutting off homely attachments and enjoying greater ' viveka ' ( solitude ) at home. Also he urges you to unremitting endeavour without being satisfied with any experiences that come and go.

our best wishes for your progress in the Dhamma!

with metta

.....

### Letter No 33

11/11/85

Most Honoured and Respected Sir,

I was very sorry I was not able to come today to meet you as I had hoped. There was incessant rain for 3 days and 3 nights and yesterday when it rained again, I knew the journey would not be possible for my car and I sent an express telegram which I hope reached you. I am so sorry about all this and hope you will be kind enough to permit me to come when the weather clears up a little.

I have had another experience during the last week. It somehow resembles what you said in your last letter might happen. A description follows:-

I had for sometime felt ( during meditation ) the molecules in different parts of my body vibrate with a sort of electric intensity. On this occasion there was an extraordinary burst of electrical charges in swift movement. The center seemed the heart, but the electrical charges swept through the entire body, right up to the top of my head and through the arms to the hands. The most vitally affected areas were the hands and the scalp. I was filled with a new strength and power I had not known earlier - I felt very well.

Please may I know how I should now proceed. Should this state be made permanent by Samadhi? I think so.

I have a feeling that the earlier experience of great peace has to merge with this new experience of power - but I may be wrong. Please may I know what I should do.

Always with my utter gratitude and thanks.

your humble and obedient pupil,

.....  
**Letter No 34**

M.N.V.

16/11/85

Dear Dayika,

I translated your letter dated 11/11/ 85 to the Venerable Nayaka Thero. He explains your latest experience in meditation as the arising of the knowledge of Dissolution ( bhanga - nana ) - one of the Insight Knowledges leading to the Fruit of stream - winning (Sotapatti Phala ) . What you described as ' vibrations ' and 'electrical charges in swift movement' are characteristics of that insight. All you have to do now is to continue on the same lines, according to him, paying more attention to 'Samadhi', and you don't have to make any special attempt at merging the two experiences.

For detailed instructions, he kindly permits you to come on any day, other than Monday, Wednesday and Saturday at the morning hour you earlier intended to come ( 8.40 ? )

Wishing you progress in the Dhamma,  
with metta

.....  
**Letter No 35**

6/12/85

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

Firstly I wish to express the highest appreciation for the wonderful talk and advice you gave all 3 of us on our visit to Mitirigala. It has been an inestimable help to us, as well as our families and friends - what advice you gave us we endeavour to share with others.

I have had 3 recent experiences during meditation which I should like to place before your Highness -

(1) The first occurred about 3 days ago. The electrical showers of rain I had spoken to you about, seemed scattered over my body - After a while the body from the waist to my head seemed to leap upwards and outside my body and then back again.

(2) As I was practicing Ana-pana Sati , the breathing could no longer be felt. Instead there was the heart- beat. I concentrated on this, which gradually grew fainter and fainter, until I felt it not in my heart but in my head- Then it faded out altogether from the top of my head.

(3) On 5th Dec, about 2 a.m. I was meditating when the entire body was filled with the electric rain. The the entire body broke up into a sort of mist. The outer contours of the body disappeared and every thing was merged in ( I think it must be ) in space outside the body (?) It was reminiscent of the earlier experiences I had of melting away, but that was more like a vision, where the eye played a part - On this occasion it was not a vision - but seemed an actual happening with full awareness of the mind concentrated on the process.

**Letter No 36**

M.N.V.

9/12/85

Your letter, as we received it, contained on only 2 written sheets, where as there might have been a third sheet, as indicated by the absense of your signature on the 2nd sheet. So the following instructions given by the Ven, Maha Thero are based upon what contained in those 2 sheets.

Your experiences show that you are well on the path, so you must intensify your practice regardless of external obstacles. Try to see every thing in the light of the 3 universal Characteristics ie. "anicca"( impermanence ) , "dukkha" (unsatisfactoriness ) and " anatta"

(soullessness ) in as many as possible ways, for it is the thorough understanding of these, that would enable one to turn away from the deceptive nature of the body and mind, towards the real peaceful state " nibbana" .

The 'electric rain' , 'body melting up' 'disappearance of the shape of the body' 'dismantling of the parts of the body' variations in the breath and heart beat are all indications of those inherent characteristics of this body. Not only internally , but they are the same in the external world as well. When true wisdom dawns, one sees these 3 signs every where. So the meditater , has to accept this position through wisdom. Don't try to revolt against the nature. If you see your body melting up completely, let it be so, you will simply be experiencing the truth. Don't wish the body to come back to the former state, as that would be a hindrance to progress.

Always be extremely mindful and try to understand with calmness. Watch after your mind and its object. Whatever the object is , the mind should not be attached to it. Understand the true nature of the object and let it go. For instance, when the ' body beating' faded away from the top of the head, you should have carefully inspected the state of mind at that time as well as immediately afterwards.

Wishing you every success in your noble endeavour to understand the 4 Noble Truths.

.....  
..... missing.....

### letter No 37

21/12/85

Please forgive me for not having signed my last letter to you. There were many troubles and I must have been disturbed as I completed the letter. In any case, it has shown my lack of Sati which I shall keep in mind and try to remedy.

I thank you very much for the instructions which I shall follow as well as I am able.

Yesterday, I had an experience during meditation - I had gathered together a fair level of Viriya and Sati - After this came Samadhi. I realized a balance had to be kept between Viriya and Samadhi - Both body and mind were very still and when the necessary Upekha was established, the sort of electric rain spread over my head, chest and shoulders; while more pronounced electric waves ran all over the lower half of the body - These merged and lasted about an hour together with a perfect relaxation and peace.

I feel now a confidence in attaining this Samadhi which I did not have earlier.

Should I try to attain this regularly?

(2) A day or two earlier I had another experience during Ana-pana meditation - I seemed to be above the body and listening to the breathing going on in the body - The inhaled breath seemed to be divided into 3 sections, but the exhaled breath was smooth - I watched this process for about 5 minutes I think, and then there seemed to be a merging as I came out of meditation.

Thank you again for every kindness shown me and in directing me on this magnificent, difficult and subtle Path.

From your humble, obedient and grateful pupil.

### Letter No 38

M.N.V.

30/12/85

Dear dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero has received your letters. I translated to him the contents of your letter of the 21st. He assures you that both your experiences are signs of progress on the 'Path' By way of further instructions he said that you may certainly try to attain that Samadhi regularly, only, that you should not allow any 'Uddhaca' ( restless) state

of mind, by undue eagerness for results. Just make it part of your daily routine. The second experience too has its 'vipassana' value, which he recognised as part and parcel of dawning Insight Knowledge.

with best wishes for your progress  
with metta

.....

### Letter No 39

5/1/86

Most Venerable and Revered Sir,

My grateful thanks for the instructions received. I shall endeavour to follow them with care. Please forgive me for writing to you again so soon. I hope I am not being a nuisance but varying developments seem to be occurring almost simultaneously. I shall describe them below.

- (1) There is a strong itching sensation over the body, including the scalp, which occurs, sometimes during and often after the periods of meditation.
- (2) The electric waves now fill the entire body and head and they seem to move out from the top of the head - and I hear very clearly a humming sound which seems to come from the sky. I hear this sound quite frequently now, accompanied by a sensation at the top of the head - I think they may ( or may not ) be inter-connected.
- (3) In the previous letter ( not the last letter ) you had said " when true wisdom dawns one sees the 3 signs ( Anicca, Dukkha Anatta ) everywhere.

Now I must recount some experiences I had some time ago. I was practising the meditation of looking at an object, eyes open and without blinking. One day, I was seated in my garden 'gazing' at a plot of grass when I saw it break up into moving ( vibrating ) particles. Not only the grass, but all the trees surrounding me as well. There was a beam of sunlight which also broke into rainbow colours. Every particle was in movement and vibration, and every thing ran into a togetherness with a mist connecting them all. Then I was strangely aware that the heart beat I felt in my body corresponding exactly to the pulse beat that I saw running through the scene. I also used to see the faces of people I was talking to suddenly covered by a similar mist and the flesh would dissolve and I could see the bone formation exposed like a skeleton from beneath.

Sometimes a block of shops would be enveloped in this mist and would commence to dissolve - as it was rather strange I gave up this meditation.

I wonder whether I should start on this meditation again? And I also wonder whether this may have anything to do with the understanding of Anatta?

(a) These experiences were with my eyes open ( b ) The other experience ( where I saw my body dissolve ) were with closed eyes.

I should be most grateful to have some understanding of the meaning of these occurrences.

With every good wish for the New Year  
Your grateful, humble and obedient pupil.

.....

P.S., I also have experiences in hearing - The sea is about 1/2 a mile from my house but during meditation I clearly hear the sound of the far away waves. ( 2 ) The railway is also about 1/2 mile away but sometimes I hear the engine and the movements of its wheels.

### Letter No 40

M.N.V.

14/1/86

Dear Dayika,

The venerable Nayaka Thero has received your letter of the 5th instant. He was much impressed by the experience recounted in your letter, particularly by your flash - back to a previous experience (no 3 ) He says that all these experiences are various aspects of the Knowledge of Dissolution ( bhanga Nana ). What you feel internally ( strong itching sensation , electric waves etc. ) are the result of that insight 'turned on ' towards one's own body. The dissolution of one's own body is the 'net result.' The breakup of the plot of grass, sun's rays, faces, blocks of houses etc. into vibratory particles is the manifestation of that insight switched on externally. The exposure of skeletons in people you see is also common to that same insight, from which the other insights like those of Terror ( Adinava ) and Disenchantment ( nibbida ) can 'take-off'. The Venerable Nayaka Thero assures you that there is no aberration evident in your experiences and that you may certainly develop your meditation on the same lines. He also said that you may feel confident of the fact that you are well on the Path to the First stage of Sainthood ( Sotapatti phala ).

Regarding your observations on the faculty of hearing, he says that they are signs of Samadhi 'picking - up ' . To developed samadhi, normally indiscernible sounds become clear and audible.

Best wishes for you progress!

with metta

.....

P.S. The venerable Nayaka Thero is back at Nissarana Vanaya since the 10th.

#### **Letter No 41**

23/1/86

Most Honoured and Respected Sir,

My sincere thanks for your kind letter with the assurance that my meditation is going fairly alright. I am happy about this and shall endeavour to continue according to instructions. There are some things I wonder about.

(1) About vibration that spread over my head and body - I do not seem to have any control over them- They come and go as they like. I have been studying them closely and I think now that to control them I should fix the mind inwards without thought, balanced and stilled (Sati) . So while at work the mind is sent outwards. As soon as work is finished the mind could be turned inwards and fixed (sati) - but on nothing whatsoever, but in a state of stillness, alertness and balance - neither agitated nor sleepy. I wonder if this is correct?

On the day Your Highness's letter arrived, I had a further experience about 4 a.m. It was as follows:- I had been meditating for a fair length of time - Now I saw with closed eyes that every thing around me had vanished ( I had no body or thinking mind- only an awareness ) There were no tangible objects anywhere- only a film of mist. This experience lasted a very short time - As it faded I seemed aware of 2 words Pragna and Karuna plus a feeling calm and well being. I considered the 2 words a little peculiar - Maybe they were reflexions of impressions in my mind which had surfaced.

With my gratitude and renewed thanks for leading me on this wonderful Path.

Your humble and obedient pupil.

.....

#### **Letter No 42**

M.N.V.

25/1/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero has received your letter of the 23rd, which I translated to him. He observed that your ability to fix the mind inwards without thought - balanced and stilled is one that only a developed meditator possesses, and is therefore, commendable. About those 'vibrations', however, he says they are mere manifestations of the true nature of Nama - Rupa - Sankharas, and as such you can also resort to 'mental-noting' to step up 'vipassana'.

The special experience you had mentioned ('every thing ..... had vanished..... no body or thinking mind etc.) is a highly significant experience, if it had been preceded by that state of 'balanced and stilled mind' which you now and then find yourself in. To say something more conclusive about it, he wishes that you send a more detailed account of it as far as you can remember. In addition to what went before (that brief while of nothing-ness) you may also mention whether you are aware of any significant change in your attitude, sensory experiences, values etc. Since that brief experience: ie. whether it has had any noteworthy effect on your ways of thought.

Best wishes for your steady progress in the Dhamma.  
with metta

.....

### Letter No 43

29/1/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

Once again my grateful thanks for the kind instructions in the letter of 25/1/86. I shall now try to answer the questions placed before me regarding my experience (in "everything vanishing") during meditation - except awareness.

Question 1 - Had the experience been preceded by that state of a "balanced and stilled mind" that some times come to you?

Answer 1 - Yes, my mind was balanced and still after about 2 hours of meditation. Those swift intuitive visions only come to me after fairly long periods of meditation. I had got up for meditation at 2 a.m. and the vision flashed in shortly after 4 a.m. It is only when the mind is calm- yet alert and has ceased to function and register in any way whatsoever that very clearly the vision flashes in.

Question 2 "A detailed account of what went on before the vision"

Answer 2 I cannot recall the exact order of my meditation but I commenced meditation at 2 a.m. after a good night's rest. I went through Metta Bavana, Vedana Bavana, the recollection of 37 Bodhipakkhiyas, 4 Satipatthana, 7 Bojjangas, 12 Pattecasamuppada, 10 Paramitas, 10 Sanyojanas, Anicca, Dukkha Anatta,- Then Sakman Bavana and finally Anapana. I always end with ana-pana as then my mind is balanced and I can continue undisturbed till morning for a fairly long spell. The vision (if it comes?) always comes during this period. The vision comes absolutely unexpectedly.

I shall recall some earlier Visions:

- 1) In one vision I saw my body vanish little by little into a still large ocean.
- 2) In the next vision my body broke up and vanished gradually into thin air- This time there was no ocean. I did not seem to have a thinking mind. (only awareness of proceedings)
- 3) This last time there was only my awareness from the start - no body - no thinking mind - My awareness was that everything, everywhere had disappeared, on a much larger scale than before. The vanishing did not take place gradually

( as in the former experience of my body vanishing ). It was a flash in which everything which existed disappeared - only a mist remained. Everything happened swift but clearly. I was left in a state of calm happiness and a feeling of well being and strength.

Question 3 Are you aware of any significant change in yourself, attitude, sense experiences, values etc.?

Answer 3 I shall try to answer this question but it is difficult as I have been changing fast in my character for the last 6 months or so.

(a) I used to have a quick temper. Now I never get angry (even in thought- I check it immediately as I am immediately aware) and I replace it by a thought of the Buddha's doctrine and how he would advise me to handle the situation.

(b) I used to be fond of certain sweetmeats. My children bring me these things but I am surprised to find I am no longer interested. I have no particular desire for them or for any sense object. This gives me freedom and joy as I have all I want.

(c) Whatever trials come up I find calmness very quickly by thinking of the Dhamma- So I feel my equanimity is developing - but must be improved further.

(4) I get my joy by trying to be useful to others e.g. There are three blind people I see regularly as they are very lonely. I also have some mental cases whom I try to help- I used to help at the asylum ( Angoda) and got good results with the patients. The authorities wished me to teach and train others who were in charge of the patients. This I could not do - Since anything I was able to do , to help , was the result of seeing into the patient's minds - only when you can feel as the patient feels, can you truly comfort them.

Now I look around to help others in any way I can. This is my joy.

(5) Many friends come to me now and wish to know something of the Dhamma- so I try to explain what little I know- but I also explain that I do not know sufficient - Only what I know, can I explain to them and that would be in the field of meditation. - But I find that always at all times every problem, everything that happens I connect immediately in my mind with the Dhamma- This is my way now and therein lies my Peace. These characteristics have grown and now I have a deep Faith and Confidence- Perhaps this last experience has given me a strongly rooted strength and confidence. I have no fear or uncertainty - I can move forward strong, confident - joyous and nothing can take it from me since it is intangible.

I have tried to answer the questions asked of me, but they are not easy to clarify. If further clarification would be helpful in any way, I would indeed be delighted to come one day to Mitirigala. There are some past experiences too which maybe I ought to mention, but these were even before I started meditation in earnest.

With many thanks for all this kindness in guiding me and with every good wish to your Highness.

Always your grateful and humble pupil

.....

P.S. I wish to express my thanks and gratitude for all the kindness shown me by Bikkhu ..... for helping me with his clear interpretation of the Master's instructions. How could I have managed without them. I am indeed lucky! Many many thanks.

#### Letter No 44

M.N.V.

2/2/86

To .....

The venerable Nayaka Thero is in receipt of your letter of 29th Jan. He gave some deep thought to its contents when I translated them to him, and asked me to pass on the following instructions to you.

Please go through the sections on 'Insight Knowledges' in his book on the Seven Stages of Purification and The Insight Knowledges\* and write back informing him how much of it is a matter of experience or 'realization' to you now, after all your experiences mentioned in your letters. The venerable Maha Sayadaw's "Progress of Insight" is also a book giving a detailed explanation of stages of Insight.

Best wishes for your progress in the Dhamma  
with metta

.....  
P.S. (about your P.S.)

The meditation is part of one's obligation to a revered Teacher and also an expression of 'mudita' (sympathetic joy) for those who strive to see the 'Miracle of the Dhamma' in their lives.

\* The book "Seven Stages of Purification and The Insight Knowledges" can be accessed at [http://www.buddhanet.net/pdf\\_file/bm7insight.pdf](http://www.buddhanet.net/pdf_file/bm7insight.pdf)

**Letter No 45**

6/2/86

Most Ven. and Honoured Sir,

As instructed I have studied Chapter VI on the 9 Insight Knowledges and I think my experiences seem to cover rather closely all these 9 knowledges. Chapter VII deals with a further development of Purity, concentration, balance while letting go of the Ego and all claim to the conditioned existence - with full understanding that everything which changes is charged with Dukkha. In abandoning all these which should be abandoned and cultivating the qualities which should be developed, there has to be a ceaseless mindfulness and endeavour - and a ceaseless endeavour towards the Eternal - the Changeless - the unconditioned- Nibbana. There are the principles I try always to keep in mind.

Peace I think I may have experienced during meditation (1) The aftermath of seeing myself dissolve, and (2) After seeing the dissolution of everything into a mist as viewed in my last vision.

Now after reading Chapter VII I begin to wonder whether this last vision is something connected with the void- Sunyata - accompanied as it was with rest and Peace.

But I wonder whether I can know or judge myself? Would it be totally impartial - I can only try to be so.

My knowledge too is inadequate though in the field of experience I have been blessed. Only someone with both knowledge and experience could really judge (my progress).

But of one thing I feel certain and that is that I keep growing in Peace and contentment and the back-ground for this is the attempted development of love and thoughtfulness for others. How closely connected this love is with joy and peace. Without experiential knowledge of this truth I could never have really understood.

After a time when one is at Peace and everything can be dissolved into this peace, one lives a life governed by this Peace, Joy and Contentment- free from fear and anxiety.

There is a point when one has to travel alone and I contemplate on this point, now, at this moment of aloneness of no thinking.

Your humble and obedient pupil,  
with every good wish and my eternal thanks.

.....  
A Further Experience

As I commenced meditating I experienced an itching sensation (which I often get at the start of meditation) at the base of the spine - Then a powerful current of force swept upwards through my body until it arrived at the heart level. (It did not go further) There was

a hot glow ( Not unpleasant ) and I started perspiring - My body from feet to heart was filled with this force - It was like a current I used to feel, but of greater intensity. It remained for about 10 minutes and I was aware of a powerful heart beat - I started counting the heart beats from 1 to 100 - then over and over again in hundreds - Then fairly soon my legs grew cold and very very gradually everything normalized. It was rather a frightening experience.

(2) I must also mention a physical change I have observed - My skin colour has changed to a much lighter hue. The skin texture has become delicate and has a glow as of silk when light falls on it. I first noticed this change on my hands ( at the wheel) while driving my car - When I noticed this shine I thought it was because my hands were perspiring in the sun. But now I realize there is a permanent change throughout the whole body.

.....

#### Letter No 46

M.N.V

11/2/86

Dear Dayika,

I translated your letter of the 6th instant to the Venerable Nayaka Thero, who made the following comments:-

(1) To reach the culmination of your present line of progress you need only a very short while, but in order to build up that 'spurt' you will have to see that both concentration and insight pull on together like yoked bulls ( 'yuga naddha'). He infers that at present they are not well balanced in your case. He also advises that you set apart at least one week of strenuous effort keeping yourself totally free from other cares and activities.

(2) About your recent experience in samadhi, he observed that your fear ( 'frightening experience ' ) prevented it from developing into a very good samadhi in which the 'current' would have reached the top of your head, instead of stopping short at the heart. So he advises you not to get excited when something out of the ordinary happens next time. In general, he was appreciative of your unflinching devotion to the TASK.

Best wishes for your further progress!

with metta

.....

#### Letter No 47

10/2/86

Most Ven. and Honoured Sir,

In my last letter dated 6/2/86 I spoke of a rather alarming experience I had during meditation - when my heart started beating rapidly and broke out into a sweat and the electric current swept over my body.

It is very interesting that after this experience, that now, during meditation I seem to have arrived at a stable level - In this new experience, (and I have had it repeated 3 times) the heart seems to be the centre. From it radiates in all directions, a sort of vapour which floods the entire body. It has an electric power but is within my control. The body is filled with a pleasant glow and this experience can last 30 minutes or more.

I feel maybe the earlier current has stabilized itself and I seem capable of having the experience repeated during meditation. I feel well and strong physically and my ailments seem to have vanished almost entirely now. Earlier my troubles used to come and go.

Please may I know how I should continue? Should I attempt to procure this state outside meditation hours as well?

With my thanks and gratitude for leading me on.

Your grateful and humble pupil,

.....  
**Letter No 48**

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero is in receipt of your letter of the 10th. He was glad to know that your Samadhi has reached a stable level and that you are in control of it. By way of instructions, he said that you should by all means try to maintain that level of experience, if possible even outside meditation hours, or at least to maintain good 'Sati' where "Samadhi" is not possible. He also recommends that you may read with profit the relevant sections on Samadhi (4jhanas) in the Samannaphala Sutta of the Digha Nikaya. ( Dialogues of the Buddha)( Sutta No 2) where the Buddha gives scintillating similes to illustrate the actual experiences in the Jhanas. Maybe it will strike a familiar note for you.

The instructions given in the previous letter ( which may have reached you by now ) still hold good as far as your progress in insight is concerned.

The Venerable Nayaka Thero stressed that you should set apart 3-4 days of intensive meditation for that purpose. He also gave a special hint as to how you should proceed :-

Immediately after a good sitting session with your now stable samadhi, you should turn your attention to Nama - Rupa as they are manifest to you in Anapana - sati, It will set you on the track to higher levels of Insight.

Best wishes for your progress,  
with metta

.....

**Letter No 49**

19/2/86

Most Honoured and Respected Sir,

Thank you very much indeed for the last 2 letters. In the first letter it says " You will have to see that both concentration and insight are balanced . I am not quite sure what the word "concentration " connotes - would it stand for Samatha Bavana or Sati? or may be both?

I realize too well that my sati is deficient. I shall do my best to rectify this weakness.

(1) I have contacted friends who will send me the Digha Nikaya . After I have read the 2nd Sutta I shall write back if some of my experiences tally.

(2) I shall also endeavour to keep apart certain days devoted only to meditation and the Dhamma.

(3) I shall follow closely instructions of turning my attention to Nama -Rupa (as manifested to me in Ana-pana) immediately after a session of meditation.

Now I have had another experience extremely difficult to describe. I meditated for about 1 1/2 hours and had reached a good state of Samadhi. The next thing I realized was that I had got out of Samadhi, but not before I had experienced an extraordinary level of Peace and Rest, never before experienced. I had been transformed into the quality of Peace and completely unconscious of myself - It was a subtle and immaterial experience. All the other experiences I have had so far

( of dissolving and disappearing into a mist etc.) seemed gross and material in comparison. I was not sure if I was asleep when I experienced this, (but I never fall asleep)

Time did not seem to come into this experience (In earlier experiences I had always known roughly how long the experience lasted) Now time did not seem to function.

The Peace was of the quality of that found in sleep - Perhaps that was why I thought I had been asleep.

All other experiences I could describe clearly - but this was of a new order. Completely intangible to both senses and mind - Was I awake or asleep when it occurred and what was it?

With my thanks for every thing and my thanks for the wonderful interpretation by the kind Rev. ....

With all my gratitude

Your humble and obedient pupil

.....

### Letter No 50

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero is in receipt of your letter of the 19th. When I had translated it to him, he announced that at last you have reason to be happy that your endeavours are 'Fruite'-ful. That 'extraordnaty level of Peace and Rest never before experienced' in which you 'had been transformed into the quality of Peace' ..... etc. is the Fruit of Stream - winning ( Sotapattiphala) . It is the taste of Bliss of Nibbana - the true awakening ("was I awake of sleep?" you were more awake than asleep )

The fact that "Time did not seem to come into this experience" shows that it is a supermundade level. ("All other experiences I have had so far .... seemed gross and material in comparision").

While congratulating you on your success, the Venerable Nayaka Thero instructs you as to how you should re-attain that same experience in Phala samapatti. You have only to get into the same frame of mind (as far as you can recollect) which you were in, when that experience occurred and make a formal determination like "May I re-attain that sublime level of Nibbanic bliss - may I re-attain the Fruit of the First Path" He said that you should also determine the period of experience, say..... May I remain in it for one minute, (and then) for 2 mts, 5 mts and so on.

The experience will last exactly the period for which you determine it. He also encourages you to further pregress on the noble Path.

Ref. that littel point on terminology: 'concentration' is the usual rendering for samadhi in the triple training sila, samadhi , panna. 'Samatha' is calm or Serenity as opposed to vipassana (insight) , a more generic term covering the trend , and tenor of samadhi. 'Sati is mindfulness the precursor of samadhi which lasts longer. I hope you could sort out the reference to concentration in the earlier letter in this context. (You may take it as the power of concentration in relation to the power of insight)

Best wishes for your further progress.

with metta

.....

### Letter No 51

23/2/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

Thank you once more for the letter of much good news. It has given me great happiness - But all the credit for the happening must go to the Great High Priest who has trained me ( for the last 7 years ) with the greatest kindness, wisdom and patience - as well as to those who have translated his words for me with perfect clarity. I shall always follow the instructions given in this last letter as well as I am able.

With my infinite thanks and gratitude,  
Ever your humble and ovedient pupil.

.....

### Letter No 52

28/2/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

I write again , to state that a previous experience I had had of heavy heart beats, perspiring and fear, returned again last night. But this time I had no fear, the heart beats not as intense, and the perspring not so profuse.

There was a warm glow and the heart beats travelled up the back of my neck and enveloped my head. This lasted for at least half and hour - In fact it was a pleasant experience!

As your Highness suggested in your last letter, I would like very much to continue further work on the Path (despite my age 78 years!) Should this be alright.

I would like very much to pay a visit to Your Higness and if possible to meet Ven. Bikkhu ..... as well to express my thanks for everything. If this is possible please may I have a date any day after March 16th - which maybe convenient for your HHighness.

With every good wish and renewed thanks for the Grace and Guidance given me.

Your humble and obedient pupil.

.....

### Letter No 53

2/3/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

I thought I would like to check up as to whether I was following correctly the instructions for attaining Samapatti Phala given to me by Your Highness -

(1) I had to recall my last experience as well as I could -

I recall this as an experience rather like a sleep where I am only conscious of Rest and Peace -

(2) Keeping this thought in mind I have to wish that the experience should be re-experienced: The length of time for the duration of the experience should be fixed earlier.

Now I have been doing this and seem to find that I can come by this experience quite often for about a half hours duration each time. But I am not sure if I am doing this correctly. The reason for my doubt is because very soon after I place my mind on the subject - The heart-beat which had entered my head, (of which I had spoken earlier ) seems to come up in a very gentle form and then almost vanishing leaves a sense of Peace and Rest.

This Peace seems to rest somehow on the faint pulsation. I wonder if this is correct and as it should be -

Usually I have to struggle hard before I get a result - but this result has come so soon, that it is possible I am not doing what i should -

I beg glarification on this point please.

With every good wish and my ever grateful thanks.

You obedient and humble pupil.

.....

### Letter No 54

M.N.V.

7/3/86

Your letters dated 23/2 . 28/2 and 2/3 respectively, have reached the Venerable Nayaka Thero, one of them rather delayed because the address was not sufficiently legible ( it had gone to 'Nivitagala' first).

I am sorry if I had not put down the instructions for re-attaining phala samapatti clear enough. What you have to recall regarding your previous experience is that state of 'samadhi' and the mental 'make - up' which served as the basis for the 'sleep - like ' experience of Rest and Peace. However, the purpose is served all the same if you do find it easy to re-attain it at will. But on the point, since you are in doubt, the venerable Nayaka Thero suggests that you re-arouse the series of Insight Knowledges (which must precede that actual experience of Peace) one by one, by similar acts of determining, so that you can verify for yourself whether it is the First Path. So to begin with, he advises you to re-arouse the knowledges of Rise and Fall ('Udayabbaya - Nana ' ) thus:

(1) Make a formal determination (in the seated posture) : May I attain to and experience the Knowledge of Rise and Fall for a period of 5 minutes.

(2) Immediately you direct your mind to anapanasati ( which had helped you to attain those knowledges).

You will find that you 'automatically' awaken after 5 minutes of that particular experience. You may increase the period gradually. The venerable Nayaka Thero says that you should not be discouraged if this does not work at the first attempt. You should go on doing it and when you are 'adept' as to the ' Knowledge of Rise and Fall ', follow the same method with regard to the other Insight knowledges, kn. Dissolution, kn. of Terror etc, as given in the book of Insight Knowledges. Thus you will be able to distinguish the particular knowledges, some of which (towards the end of the series ) are almost imperceptibly blending into succeeding ones.

The Venerable Nayaka Thero asked me to reassure you that what you have gone through could well be the Fruit of the First Path, since it is quite possible that you pass through the set of knowledges very rapidly when you attain to that "Peace' in a matter of seconds. So you may set about the work of re-attaining with confidence.

Regarding your request for permission to see the Venerable Nayaka Thero , he informs you that you can come on the 20th of March (thursday) between 7 a.m. - 9 .30 a.m.

Best wishes for your progress,

with metta

.....

### Letter No 55

8/3/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

With regard to the Phala Samapatti, which I was instructed to practise - About a week ago I wrote to Your Highness to say that I thought I could get this Phala at will - but that there seemed to be a background of fine vibrations to the feeling of Calm and Rest which I experienced.

Now after an experience last night, I think I was wrong in my judgment (then expressed).

This new experience I think maybe nearer to the Phala condition. Its signal characteristics were

(1) disappearance of all vibrations

(2) heart - beats

(3) breathing ( breathing seemed to travel inwards in my chest and gradually disappeared )

So there was nothing existent except the awareness of a wonderful Peace and Rest. This I think must be the Phala Samapatti - with the earlier experience, there was uncertainty in my mind - But this was clear with no doubts attached.

I think this must be the state I should strive for, to maintain and develop. Am I correct in my assumption? I realize only too well I maybe wrong again since it is unfamiliar ground I am treading - I had also decided on the time limit of 10 minutes and this too seemed in order. With many thanks indeed for everything - Instructions, as well as clear translations.

With my gratitude and thanks

Your always obedient and humble pupil,

.....

### Letter No 56

M.N.V.

14/3/86

Dear Dayika,

The venerable Nayaka Thero received your letter of 8/3 yesterday. He confirms that the experience you have had is 'Phala Samapatti', according to the description given.

You must have received by now the letter sent in reply to your 3 earlier letters. It seems many of your letters first go to 'Nivitigala' (even the latest one) so it might be better if you address it to 'Nissarana Vanaya' because this arannya is well known by that name. Perhaps you may do well to put down MITIRIGALA in capitals too.

You may visit Mitirigala on the 20th (Thursday) between 7 - 9.30 a.m. as mentioned in my previous letter.

Best wishes for your progress.

with metta

.....

### Letter No 57

14/3/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

So very many thanks for the letter of 7/3/86 with clear detailed instructions. Strangely I was just about to write about my practice during the last 10 days - I think I am able to call up this state of Peace to mind fairly often now. As you had indicated in your earlier letter I used :-

- (1) To sit very still with relaxed body.
- (2) Empty the mind except for the one thought of Peace and conscious sleep.
- (3) Still the breathing as far as possible.
- (4) Then say "May I attain this bliss for 10 minutes". Shortly I would find myself enveloped in this utter Peace. I think that now I can retain this even while walking. But the step must be very quiet and the eyes shut to all external things - The eyes have to be focussed inwards on Peace. I feel much more assured now.

At the same time, there is another process which keeps coming up for longer and more frequent periods,

This is the heart beat which is now also in my head and often permeates the entire body - Its characteristics are :

- (1) It comes and goes at any time and may stay 1 minute or 5 minutes or more each time.
- (2) There is a scratching sensation of the scalp when it commences.
- (3) There is a burning sensation in the eyes.
- (4) When it (the whole process) wears off, I am left in a state of radiant well being.

(5) There is a patch at the top of my head which seems under pressure during the process - but not after.

This process occurs often in the early mornings as well as throughout the day.

My grateful thanks for permission to come on the 20th March. Mrs ..... will be giving me a lift as my car is rickety. We both look forward to coming.

We hope His Highness keeps in good health. So many thanks for the further instructions.

Your humble and grateful pupil.

.....  
**Letter No 58**

15/3/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

I have just received your letter dated 14/3/86 and am delighted the Samapatti Phala is fairly alright. I posted a letter yesterday about our coming to Mitirigala, but thought I ought to confirm this once again since my letters go astray. Mrs ..... and I shall be at Mitirigala on March 20th Thursday about 8 a.m.

with renewed thanks for everything.

Your humble and obedient pupil.

.....  
**Letter No 59**

30/3/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

I hope Your Highness may have recovered from the discomfort felt in the head. I think Mr..... has intended sending a doctor along to see to this and I hope all is well now.

I offer my sincere gratitude and thanks to Your Highness and the Ven. Bikkhu ..... for all the kindness shown to Mrs ..... and myself when we came to Mitirigala. It was indeed a privilege to have had all our queries clarified and to have had further advice and instructions.

I have been carrying out the instructions of combining the 9 Nanas (Individually) with the thought of the Nibbanic Bliss and also for timing each Nana for 5 minutes duration.

I have found this exercise most beneficial in concentrating the Nibbanic Bliss into a stable condition. I can now remain in this state for a considerable period of time, (perhaps 45 minutes). I also try to keep this condition throughout the day as well, in between my bouts of work.

I would like to mention w events.

(1) I was asked to help a person with regard to a home problem which had to be delicately handled. I based everything I said on the Dhamma and at the end of the evening everything seemed happily sorted out.

As I left the house and was thanked and told "May everything you wish for be fulfilled".

When I got home I wondered what I wished for and found to my surprise that there was nothing - nothing at all I wanted. I was supremely happy with Nibbanic Bliss Your Highness had trained me to develop. What I had was Peace and complete Contentment. I really was not fully aware of this condition till my eyes were opened by my friend's sentence. So now I shall

try to live in this contentment in full awareness. It had come on me so gradually that I had not realized it as such.

Strange - no wishes - difficult to understand how such a transformation can come about.  
(2) I have had another unusual experience.

Early in the morning (about 4 a.m.) after quite a lot of meditation during the previous day and night - I had practised the 9 Nanas together with Nibbanic Bliss for 5 minutes after each Nana, when I was in a state of Calm and Peace .All of a sudden there was the sharp sound of a cracker in my ear and simultaneously my head seemed to be wrenched off my neck and put back into place, with no feeling of pain or discomfort. But I was frightened and a trifle shocked.

What could this be? Is there any connection between this and the heart experience, about 2 months ago - also frightening?

With all my good wishes regarding Your Highness's health and my thanks as always.

Ever your obedient and humble pupil

.....

#### Letter No 60

M.N.V.  
3/4/86

Dear Dayika,

The venerable Nayaka Thero is in receipt of your letter of 30th March.

He is in normal health now, after a short spell of sickness. He was pleased to hear the manner in which you became fully aware of the Peace and contentment you have won. As regards the event (2), however he is in need of some clarification before saying something definite about its significance. He likes to know whether you had any wish to attain a higher state when you practiced the 9 Nanas that morning, which led to a frightening experience.  
with metta

.....

P.S. Sakadagami Phala - The Fruit of Once - Returner.

#### Letter No 61

5/4/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

I beg to mention yet another experience I had 3 days ago - After about an hour of meditation , my entire head was transformed into a dynamic flash like lightning - This flash I did not see with my eyes, but I had a clear awareness of it with a sense, which had a relationship to "feeling" rather than to "seeing".

For 2 days a large amount of mucus came through my nose. Then the pressure I had felt at the top of my head vanished as well as the burning sensation in my eyes. Further, I am often aware of the beating of my heart which comes up whenever I am quite. Then travels up the back of my neck, over the ears and then the head.

The flash of lightening I experienced seemed a culmination of this movement perhaps?

I hope very much Your Highness is perfectly well again.

I carry on with the Phala Samapatti regularly.  
With every good wish and my sincerest thanks.  
Always your obedient and grateful pupil.

.....

### Letter No 62

Most Revered & Honoured Sir,

I had just posted a letter to your Highness, when your letter arrived by post. I was delighted to know that health wise, all had settled down to normal.

The question in the letter is " whether I had any wish to attain a higher state ( Sakadagami ) when I practiced the 9 Nanas that morning which led to the frightening experience.

I will try, if possible to assess my state of mind during that period - I had earlier had a letter from Your Highness where I was asked to practice the 9 Nanas. At the same time there was a wish expressed by Your Highness that I should try to continue on the Path. I was very happy to carry out both ideas. First to practice the 9 Nanas until the Nibbanic Bliss was established - When this aspect was sufficiently developed I thought I would be given further instructions for progress on the Path.

As I practiced the Nanas I discovered their power and the thought certainly passed through my mind that this exercise might be a "connection link " between steps (1) (sovan ) and (2) ( sakadagami ) .

Then when I discovered that I had genuinely lost my desire for worldly things - by the remark made by my friend " May all your wishes be fulfilled " once again the thought of the "connecting link " passed over my mind - But my mind did not pause to concentrate on this aspect - It was a subtle some - thing that came to me and then left me.

So when I was meditating that morning my outer awareness was focused on the Nanas as the principal subject of meditation - But after sometime there often may arise the powerful heart beat, and my attention may well be focused on that for a considerable period of time. This beat spreads over chest, neck and head and I seem to capture it any time I wish by being still and turning my attention inwards to the heart. It seems to be becoming my constant Companion now!

Further to the statement "May everything you wish for be granted to you " - after I had looked around at all worldly things including my children , I found no "pull" in any direction. I turned to myself and said "surely there must be a pull towards the Noble Path " and still I did not feel the former 'pull' of attachment - It was a surprise and I halted to analyse the set up then then the following was my conclusion :-

All worldly ties are fraught with anxiety - Now there was no more anxiety - Following the Path is a tie of Peace and contentment. The old way was no more. It is a new path I am treading . The Path of relinquishing, letting go, relaxed and still - No longer the tight and anxious grip of holding on - clinging - Now I am letting go, not holding on - There lies the

goal of Peace - Contentment - That was why I felt no tie to anything - How can there be a tie if you let go?

With my gratitude and thanks,  
Your humble and obedient pupil.

.....  
P.S. To the Ven. Bhikku ..... many many thanks for the letters so kindly translated for me.

### Letter No 63

M.N.V.

8/4/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero has received your letters of the 5th and the 6th. In the light of you detailed clarification he now gives you the following instructions to ascertain where you stand:

(1) Instead of determining Nanas separately, you may now directly determine to ' Sotapatti Phala ' for a number of minutes. ( "May I attain to Sotapatti Phala and remain in it for ..... mts,") If it works and you promptly attain to it, it means you are still at Sotapatti stage.

(2) If it does not work at all or stops short, you should determine to the 'Sakudagami Phala' in the same manner. This ought to work if the former does not.

Also the venerable Nayaka Thero asked me to mention that very often (though not invariably ) one who attains to a Magga Phala, experiences a ' reviewing - knowledge ' ( ' paccavekkhana nana ' ) immediately on arising from the Phala. You may scan your memory to see whether that ' frightening experience ' carried any rapid resume of its significance.

Thought the description of your ' insight - build up ' for a higher Path is convincing, the venerable Nayaka Thero recommends these tests so that you could verify for yourself whether the ' pull ' towards the 'Highest ' has had any significant result.

Best wishes for your further progress,

With metta,

.....

### Letter No 64

10/4/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

I thank Your Highness once again for the very kind letter of instructions of 8/4/86 , which I am trying to follow - There is a point I seek clarification on. The letter says "You should determine to the Sakadagami phala in the same manner." This I do not understand since I do not know what Sakadagami Phala is. In Sotapatti I recall the Nibbanic Bliss I experienced when I had that vision where everything vanished. But in Sakadagami since I have had no firm experience, I am not sure what I should place my mind on? Please may I know how I should proceed?

I am not sure if I had written clearly about the 2nd experience I had, concerning my head since this has not been mentioned in Your Highness's last letter - The 2 experiences were :-

(1) There was a sharp cracking noise and my head jumped out of my neck and back again. It was "frightening" .

(2) My head was transformed into a flash of lightning during meditation. For 3 days there was a flow of mucus from my nose which then subsided. A feeling of pressure at the top of my head also vanished.

Also I should very much like to know how the development takes place in a mind, which wishes to move from Sovan to Sakadagami. I am completely ignorant and no one is able to give me much ( or even any ) information concerning this subject.

With my very grateful thanks for everything and all help given me and my sincere gratitude and thanks to the kind priest who translates and writes these letters.

I remain  
your humble and obedient pupil.

.....

### Letter No 65

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero received your letter of the 10th. By way of clarification on the points you had raised, he said that it seems some of the insight knowledges were developing towards the Second Path and your being ' frightened ' checked that progress. In spite of the word ' frightening ' he was earlier wondering whether that experience imperfectly described the rapid but powerful event which precedes Sakadami phala ( 'head jumped out = as frightening , and put back again, ( reassuring?)

But as you are sure that it carried no Nibbanic bliss with it, the venerable Nayaka Thero is now inclined to believe that it could be some 'sporadic symptom ' of developing insight. Regarding your other experience too ( ' my head was transformed into a flash of lightning ' ) he advises you not to worry about its possible significance. Like ' the feeling of pressure at the top of the head ' ( which in itself was a problem to you some time back ) this 'experience ' which solves it and other physical problems. need not be taken seriously.

Since you wish to get some clarification on how to proceed, the venerable Nayaka Thero said that all that you have to do is, ' to determine to the Fruit of the second path and to attend to the subject of your meditation. This is because of the fact that the same cycle of insight knowledges has to turn full circle to produce the Sakadagami Phala. This may even happen without an appropriate determination when once the Insight has matured sufficiently to turn ' full circle '. This is the case with those prodigious arahants who attained the Four Fruits of the Path in rapid succession even while listening to a Buddha's sermon - thus eradicating all cankers

( asavas). They were simply following a Norm ( ' dhammata ' ) without prior instruction a Norm already implicit in Sotapatti Magga.

The difference between Sotapatti phala and Sakadagami phala is relatively small ( ' seven more births ' / ' once returner ' ) While the former Magga does away with 3 fetters, the other , only attenuates lust and hate. With each Magga one eradicates a level of defilements and latencies . It is the same Nibbanic bliss which, however, is fully realized only with Arahattamagga. You need not have any fears that you are moving towards a totally unfamiliar region.

It often happens that a meditator goes through the first two Paths in quick succession ( say within a few days ), and that is why the venerable Nayaka Thero still wants you to

check on the matter by directly determining to the Sotapatti phala. If it works, and you are sure that you are still there, you could work for the next by, setting aside for a definite period ( say, a number of days or hours ) . The ' Phala Samapatti ' of a Sotapanna and determining to the next. ( for 2 days may I not attain to the Fruit of the First Path, May I attain to the Fruit of the Second Path! ). supposing the 'Test' reveals that you are already at the Sakadagami level ( ie.if your earlier determination ' to re-attain Sotapatti phala ' does not work because it is inapplicable now ' ) , then it is only a question of enjoying the 'Second Phala ' regularly and, or determining to the Third ( Anagami phala ) as and when you think fit, 'setting - aside ' the second phala for a specific period. At the end of the specified period you could revert to the 'phala samapatti ' you have already won.

The specification of time limit is important, because otherwise it will be difficult, to re-attain your present 'phala ' in case your ' push ' towards the next fails.

Best wishes for your further progress,  
With metta

.....

### Letter No 66

12/4/86

Most Honoured & Revered Sir,

I had a further experience a few days ago. I had gone over the Nanas for 45 minutes, ( 5 minutes for each Nana ) and then on to Phala Samapatti . Shortly before I finished, the electric current ( I had earlier spoken of ) swept through my entire body from the top of my head to my feet and hands. This force then merged with the Bliss of the Phala - Samapatti and I was immersed in a state of supreme joy and Bliss for about 1 1/2 hours. It was a state more intense than any previous experience - I felt this had the quality of the involvement of the " whole Being " - No longer in bits and pieces but a unity - a completeness - What I had to do was to have the ability to ' hold ' this. Not let it go.

This I tried to do the next day and seemed successful - I think, now, I can get it at will when I have an opportunity to be quiet and still, and it may last a considerable period of time as well.

This experience came a few days ago, but I did not write immediately, as I felt it to be the greatest experience I had had so far, and I wanted to check on its veracity before I put pen to paper.

I felt every atom of mind and body had changed into an intangible substance which held within itself unknown heights of power, ( from the electric force ) and Bliss and Joy ( gained in Samapatti ) Till now, they have been separate. But now, they are united in some unknown alloy -

It is only in stillness this can be obtained. Power and strength in stillness Peace and Joy.

With all my gratitude and best wishes that Your Highness may keep fit and well and that the Ven. Bhikkhu ..... may always be blessed.

Your humble, obedient and devoted pupil.

.....

### Letter No 67

18/4/86

Most Honoured & Revered Sir,

I have according to instructions been studying ( 1 ) the Paccevekkhana Nana and ( 2 ) the practice of keeping the recollection of Nibbanic Bliss for a period of about 1/2 an hour during meditation ( but leaving out the 9 Nanas ) .

In the Paccevekkhana Nana there appears to be 5 factors to be contemplated.

- (1) Sovan Magga
- (2) Sovan Maggaphala
- (3) The defilements overcome
- (4) Defilements left
- (5) Concentration on Nibbana.

(1), (2) and (5) I think I can manage but defilements are not easy to judge. Do defilements mean the 5 Nivaranas or the 10 Samyojanas?

I believe the 3 defilements should be broken up with Sovan Magga Phala? Then come Kamaraga and Vyapada. I think with regard to the former I have made some progress since I can detach myself from many things I was unable to before. In Vyapada old mental habits keep springing up , but since I keep constant watch on my mind reactions I seem able to check thoughts before they go too far. This makes life much easier and happier.

Please may I know if there is anything else I should practice?

I had an interesting experience 2 nights ago during meditation. As instructed I had tried to recall the Nibbanic Bliss - After about 30 minutes I felt I had succeeded somewhat in capturing this Bliss, but I also felt I wished to fall asleep. The thought flashed that I would be giving into thina middha , so I did not give into this wish. Soon afterwards I found I had entered a condition which fell between being awake and asleep, of experiencing a more complete state of Peace.

It seemed to me to be an expression of the Middle Way ( once again a union of opposites ) similar to the earlier experience when the two opposing currents in my body had merged with a oneness - (1) The current in the head and the heart, of Peace, and (2) current in the body of power.

This seemed a second such merging. There seems to me that there was 2 courses of activity which could be concentrated on and so developed.

- (1) Nibbanic Bliss current
- (2) The power current which fills the body.

What I wonder should I do? Should these 2 be linked?

With all my thanks and good wishes for the instruction so kindly sent me - and the very lucid translations.

Always your humble , obedient and grateful pupil.

.....

P.S. Description of experiences got more and more difficult to put into words.

### [Letter No 68](#)

21/4/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

I have had another experience this morning after 1 1/2 hours meditation. Both body and mind were stilled and then I found the breathing stilled as well. As I tried to investigate the phenomena the breath returned faintly. I knew at once it was a mistake to investigate - I stilled the mind completely and the breathing vanished again. Although the breath had vanished it kept returning for 4 or 5 breaths and then vanished again. After a repetition of this for 4 or 5 times the breath disappeared totally.

There was no discomfort at all- Then everything vanished. There was nothing, no mind, no body , no breath - nothing anywhere, and the unusual thing was that this time, there seemed to be no feelings attached - In nearly all my other experiences I thought I knew

through some form of awareness and feeling e.g. Peace plus happiness. This time, that feeling of happiness (which seems to me now an earthly feeling ) was replaced by something more subtle and abstract. Just pure stillness aware clearly of nothing whatsoever.

And this state continued for some time. I am wondering if this state could have something to do with the Sakadagami Magga. In the Sovan process there were 2 processes - (1) Flash of nothing (2) followed by a fair period of Peace and Bliss - Here there was no 2 sections but a continuous awareness of nothing for a longer period and a different quality of Peace.

Since Your Highness wished me to try to ascertain ( by myself ) where I stand as I ventured on the Path, I wondered if I was near Sakadagami Magga?

With my gratitude and thanks always

Your faithful humble and obedient pupil.

.....

### Letter No 69

M.N.V.

24/4/86

Dear Dayika,

Then Venerable Nayaka Thero is in receipt of your 3 letters dated 12/4 , 18/4 and 21/4. As your last letter arrived before his comments on the first two were penned, these too were reviewed against its contents. So I shall state his comments on the third letter first. He considers that the experience described there ( ' ..... everything vanished .... nothing anywhere.... just pure stillness - aware clearly of nothing whatsoever ' ) is a very good instance of stilling of all sankharas. He observed that your earlier experiences of ' phala - samapatti ' must not have been clear enough, perhaps interrupted by sankharas off and on. But in this instance of a continuous awareness of nothing ..... ' you were confronted with ' Nibbana ' as the object which is ' Visankhara ' - the very absence of sankharas. He too wonders whether this clearer vision of Nibbana is the result of your attaining the Fruit of the Second Path, but he re-iterates that the onus of its proof is on you. And with this , I shall put down his instructions in general on ' how to proceed ' in the context of the first two letters as well ( that is, wherever he thought it fit to comment ) .

(1) Please make it a point to determine to Phala Samapatti by its particular name : ie. " May I re-attain to the Fruit of the First Path, Sotapatti phala for .... minutes " to begin with. This is the criterion to judge whether you are still there, for if you aren't, it will not work, due to'dhammata'

( the wrong gear! ) Then you can try with a determination for the Second Phala which ought to work.

(2) Wherever you are, he recommends as an exercise to ' push - forward ' , further development of the Seven Enlightenment factors.

This you could do, in addition to what has already been stated in my last letter regarding the rejection of your present phala for a specific period and determining for the next - giving it a try.

As to the Paccavekkhana Nana referred to in my last letter, please note that all you have to do is to ' scan your memory ' whether at least a trace of a ' resume ' crossed your mind immediately after your attainment. If such a thing did not occur as far as you can remember, you don't have to worry - as it is not a ' MUST' .

The 3 fetters broken up by the First Path are ' Sakkayaditthi ( Personality view),Vicikiccha

( Uncertainty - as to the Path etc. ) ' Silabbata paramasa ( dogmatic adherence to rites and ritual). The attenuation of the next two fetters by the 2nd Path might not be easily judged - hence the above ' Test ' through the method of Determining.

Also by way of clarification the reference to ' defilements overcome and defilements left ' in the context of Paccavekkhana Nana in the book, does not apply to 'Nivaranas ' but to the 10 Samyojanas.

Best wishes for your progress!  
with metta

.....

### Letter No 70

25/4/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

This morning about 2 a.m. I had a remarkably dynamic experience which I felt I must describe forthwith before details are forgotten.

My meditation was on Metta - Karuna

- (1) filling myself with Metta, Karuna.
- (2) sending Metta and Karuna to all my friends
- (3) to every one in general
- (4) That my house may be filled with M. K.
- (5) That M.K should fill everything North, South East and West.
- (6) That it may fill the entire universe.

Very suddenly my entire body began to throb and was filled with the electric current. The throb in the heart was very marked - Then my whole body was filled with an unbelievable "glow" and warmth. I burst into a sweat. The "glow" filled my body, then radiated outside the body in all directions into space. - It was a fantastic experience - Again I was very conscious of the heart beat - After which it subsided - The former electric current filled my body - I was thirsty and got up for some water and felt a marked weakness in my legs . Three times, I had to go for water despite the weakness in my limbs, during which period the current persisted all along. After about 2 hours of perfect stillness I fell asleep - When I awoke I still felt weak and did not go out to do my usual work.

Now it is 4 p.m. I feel excellent.

I do not know how to express my thanks for the last letter received where all problems have been cleared. I thank the Ven. .... too most deeply for the succinct analysis and how I should proceed. I shall endeavor to carry out the instructions to the best of my ability.

I hope Your Highness is well and fit.

With kind regards and my grateful thanks.

As always your obedient and humble pupil.

.....

### Letter No 71

30/4/86

Most Revered and Honoured Sir,

Another interesting experience occurred on the morning of 29/4/86- I had attended to all the instructions given in the last letter - Went over 7 Bojjhargas, 9 Nanas, 5 Paccavekkhanas and settled down to - "May I attain to the Sakadagami Magga Phala " - After a while I found myself dissolve completely and became one with all (space). Duality no more. It was like salt dissolved in water - ( a statement I had read some where some time ago. Now I knew what was meant). There was no thought , no judgment, no self. Just a supreme oneness

of all. This was followed by the Phala which lasted a long time - I cannot say how long. Here was in truth Nibbanic Bliss perfect complete intangible, inexpressible.

When I regained normality, my joy was boundless - The Phala was of a quality difficult to describe as it seemed to emanate from the All, into which I had dissolved. Its qualities seemed touched by enveloping expansiveness - The quality of this Bliss cannot be described.

I am inclined to think after this experience, that it might be a fulfillment of Sakadagami Magga Phala.

Please may I know whether my assumption could be correct?

30/4/86

This morning 3 a.m. , I tried to attain the Sakadagami Phala and succeeded rapidly and with ease - It lasted a long period and it was so perfect i was reluctant to come out of it!

With best wishes and kindest regards.

Always your humble and obedient and ever grateful pupil.

.....

P.S. If all is clear am I to try for Anagami Magga Phala as suggested in your last letter? Please may I know.

### Letter No 72

M.N.V.

2/5/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero has received your letter dated 25/4. Regarding your experience described there, he wonders whether some of the details given at the end, (eg. weakness in limbs, heart -throb, thirst ) have anything to do with Metta - samadhi proper, which in fact has a soothing and an invigorating effect on the system. He suggests that you may even check-up to see whether physical fatigue interferes with your practice in general. If not for those set-backs, your approach towards 'metta - ceto - vimutti ' ( deliverance of the heart through metta ) seems fairly alright, he said.

Best wishes for your progress !

with metta

.....

### Letter No 73

5/5/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

My most grateful thanks to you and the Ven. .... for the last letter received regarding the Metta experience. The analysis given was perfectly accurate as I had numerous problems(material ones) which I had to unravel, and I was in an exhausted state of body when the experience occurred. Although I am old and weak physically, I find that mentally I am alert and can draw on a source of energy which does not seem to diminish unduly.

I hope Your Highness keeps in good health.

With my best wishes always and my thanks as ever,  
your grateful and humble pupil.

.....

### Letter No 74

M.N.V.

3/5/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero has received your letter dated 30/4. He was glad to hear its contents, and said that you are right in your assumption ( which you have already tested ) . It is the 'Sakadagami Phala ' Now that this step is clear, he said that you should go ahead and try for the Third, giving more attention to the 7 Bojjhargas in case you find it rather difficult.

Best wishes for your further progress!

With metta

.....

### Letter No 75

12/5/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

I was indeed delighted to have your letter regarding the Sakadagami Magga Phala - That all was well!. I have been working on the Sakadagami Phala Samapatti and have had good results - The quality of Nibbanic Bliss attained is remarkable - Every body molecule is flooded with this bliss and I can hold it for a fairly long period. In fact, it appears almost as though it floods outside the contours of the body and into the surrounding space.

I would like to try for the Anagami Magga Phala as suggested by Your Highness's last letter, but am however woefully aware of my inadequacies - would it be possible to meet Your Highness for the instructions I require - The spoken word can clarify as no literature on the subject is able to do. I am studying the 7 Bojjhanags and though I get a surface understanding, I realize I have not penetrated its subtler depths - I need to understand the binding together of these qualities which may give the steel like strength and suppleness now so necessary for the development of mature intuition ( could it be? )

To put it shortly I would be so grateful if I could meet Your Highness once again after the Vesak celebrations are completed.

Please excuse me for the trouble I give Your Highness. In the meantime I shall endeavor to study the 7 Bojjhargas as well as I am able, as well as anatta and sunyata.

With my grateful thanks always and kindest remembrances and thanks to the Ven. Bikkhu ..... for all these letters.

Your humble and obedient pupil.

.....

### Letter No 76

23/5/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

Once again I thank you with all gratitude for the kind letter of 18/5/86. I shall be there as usual on the 5th of June ( Thursday ) at 8 a.m..

The meditation is going steadily I think. There appear to me to be 2 types of Peace. The earlier Peace was combined with a Bliss or rapture where every cell in the body was felt to vibrate in a perfect unity. There is also another Peace which is more Peaceful - very quiet and still devoid of the element of "feeling " , no activity - just rest. This is the new Peace I experience. But I experience both. Sometimes one and sometimes the other and sometimes one, leading to the greater Peace. It feels like being ( relaxing ) at home !

I shall write again before I come on the 5th of June as a reminder, as there is a fair length of time between now and then.

With kindest regards and many many thanks for the kind permission to come again.

Your obedient and humble pupil.

.....

**Letter No 77**

30/5/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

This experience I am about to recount occurred during meditation about 3 days ago. It was then difficult to describe - but now since it has recurred again, I shall attempt to place it before Your Highness.

I had not meditated for more than 20 minutes - The subject was " Calm " filling myself with Calmness - Then radiating this Calm throughout the Universe. I had reached a good level of Calm, when all of a sudden the electric current flooded every atom of my body - There was a wonderful feeling of strength, power and rapture. Then the particles of my body seemed to merge into space . The contours disappeared.

(1) It was rather reminiscent of the experience I had during meditation of Metta and Karuna where rays ( not atoms ) from the heart center penetrated the body and went out into space outside.

(2) Again I was reminded of an earlier vision I saw when my body dissolved into space.

But this experience was not visual - It occurred - I knew through feeling, that the atoms of my body were disintegrating into space - It seemed tangible and real ( in a physical way somehow ).

Could this be a maturing of the older experience?

It seemed to be to be connected with " Calm " and its opposite " Electrical Force " which flooded the body - I would very much like to have some understanding of this experience if I may.

With all good wishes to Your Highness and the Ven. ....and the hope that you are both in excellent health.

Your obedient and humble pupil.

.....

**Letter No 78**

1/6/86

Most Honoured and revered Sir,

I thought I would write about another experience i had this morning after about 1 1/2 hours meditation and contemplation.

(1) I had briefly gone over the 37 Bodhipakkhiyas

(2) Kayanupassana and Vedananupassana,checking on the various parts of the body

(3) The 7 Bojjhargas dividing it into 3 groups (a) viriya (effort ) (b) calm (c) Sati as balancing point - Next i got on to the 9 Nanas with 5 minutes between each Nana when I hoped I could attain the Nivan Biss - Gradually the quality of calm and electrical charges spread over the body and by the time i had reached " Adinava " ( knowledge of contemplation of Danger) the entire body commenced to dissolve - When I breathed in the atoms seemed to dissolved and merge in space.As I breathed our everything was still - There did not seem to be any obvious center in the body. ( in my earlier experience during my meditation of Metta - Karuna the center was most definitely the heart ) - Now there was no center. Just dissolving of the whole body. This was followed by the deepest, most perfect experience of Peace I have ever had so far.

I look forward with much joy to meeting your Highness on June 5th Thursday at about 8.30 a.m. as previously arranged. Mrs. .... has kindly offered to bring me in her car. Her cousin - a very pious lady and a student of the Dhamma may also, I think , be coming. I

hope this will be alright. My remembrances to the Ven. Bhikkhu ..... for all the kind help given me in the translations of his letters.

Your grateful, obedient and humble pupil.

.....  
P.S. I somehow felt supremely happy after this experience.

### Letter No 79

9.6.86

Most Revered and Honoured Sir,

I have had another strange experience when 3 events ( unconnected ) seemed to come together almost simultaneously. The only connection that was apparent was that they had electricity as a common factor - It occurred last night about 12.30. I had sought to attain Anagami Magga Phala - After about one hour or so, I was filled internally with the electric current which reached my head. From there it poured over my whole body ( outside ) as though I had poured a jug of water over my head and body. It was of an intense electrical quality - Suddenly there was a sound of a sharp cracking noise and there simultaneously I think was a brilliant white light - An electric sort of shock went through my body -I was frightened and lay quite still - ( The point was, there was no thunder, lightning or rain. It was a calm night ). I remained still and looked out of my window and after about 5 minutes I saw a ball of fire, orange in color come down over the garden wall. with a cracking sound - As I lay very still and thought about this last item. I knew that electric wires to the house crossed over at about this point - I got up when all seemed still and tried the lights. They had fused in the entire house. I called the government electricians in during the morning and they set the wires in order.

The strange point to my mind was how 3 events all of electrical origin should come together in a very short space of time - perhaps about 10 minutes in all.

The first experience seemed an intensified continuation of my earlier experience.

The second was something completely new to me as I never see light with my eyes.

The third was just a power failure.

I should be very grateful to know the analysis and interpretation of these events and I beg Your Highness for instructions I should follow.

Your obedient, humble and grateful pupil.

### Letter No 80

M.N.V.

13/6/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero is in receipt of your letter of the 9th instant. He got me to translate the letter for him twice - allowing for a fairly long interval of quiet pondering over. Here is the analysis and interpretation of the 3 strange events :

(1) The third and last event should be set aside as something unconnected with your meditation.

(2) Your first experience shows a very good level of Samadhi. What you refer to as 'electrical' is the piti (joy) - element of your samadhi and that 'pouring over' as of water, is the 'suka' (bliss) element of the same.

Even with regard to these pleasant experiences, you have to resort to noting ( menhikaranawa ) as mere sankharas which are impermanent.

(3) The sharp cracking noise and the brilliant light - whatever they may be - seem to have acted as an interruption to your progress, inspite of the good Samadhi. The Venerable Nayaka Thero cautions you that there could be some - times extraneous forces ( non - human ) which seek to block your progress, especially at a stage when you are going to leave behind the entire realm of Kama (sense - desires ) . Such inferences are common among meditators and so he advises you to pay more attention to ' Buddhanussati ' ( reflection on the virtues of the Buddha ) and Metta Bavana. He recommends the chanting of Metta Sutta with special attention to its meaning as an effective way of warding off evil influences.

He also advises you not to be discouraged by these distractions and interruptions and to strive on with a firm determination towards the Third Magga Phala.

Best wishes for the same!

With metta,

.....

P.S. Your earlier letters regarding the intended visit and its cancellation were also received.

### Letter No 81

17/6/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

Your Highness's letter was received yesterday. My most grateful thanks for the clarification of the 3 strange events encountered ; as well as the guidance instructions which I shall start on immediately.

During the last week I have had a further development - which I would like to mention, despite the fact that each experience becomes more and more difficult to express adequately.

The experience : I was meditating on Peace - Having filled myself with Peace I commenced to radiate Peace, all around until finally it filled everything in the entire world. ( all this was done intentionally ). ( The next step was unintentional). Everything in the world disappeared leaving a vacuum filled with Peace - There was nothing but Peace everywhere - I appeared as a small dot of electric matter - I seemed to hear 2 tiny sounds and the electronic dot ( myself ) broke up and merged into this Peace filled mighty space. No body - no mind but an awareness of the most sublime Peace. I cannot call it happiness as experienced on earth as happiness is brought about by objects, feelings or thoughts and there were no such things - So I think this must have been something close to Nibbanic Bliss - The words I would use for describing the state would be - Sublime, Total - beyond condition - supreme .

The next unusual circumstance regarding the experience is that I cannot really recall the exact state encountered - which in earlier experiences I was able to do for Samapatti Phala practice.

In the present case perhaps the mind was almost totally non - existent, at the time of occurrence and therefore I am unable to capture this state of Peace in its totality.

The following morning - after a good night's rest, I got up to find the heart beat awake in my chest and head ( This enabled me to get into Samadhi very quickly ) This had never occurred before.

Now every morning I wake up in the same condition - it is as though I have spent my sleep in meditation. Then I wake up and continue to meditate from there on, till I get an excellent Samadhi - the mind stilled in Peace and Calm. ( Though not, I think of the rare quality of Peace experienced in the first half of the letter).

I feel guilty troubling Your Highness with so many letters - but the experiences now come so fast - This was not the case about one year ago - Then I used to have an experience once in about 4 months!

Also my grateful thanks to the Ven. Bikkhu ..... for all the kindness shown me - Please forgive me if I am a nuisance or trouble - But this truly is my life - my true life - and it has been my glorious fate to have found you both.

with my sincerest thanks and good wishes,

Your devoted and humble pupil.

.....

### Letter No 82

M.N.V.

22/6/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero has received your letter of the 17th. After careful consideration ( two readings ) he observed that your latest experience shows a remarkable development in your meditation. As to its significance, however, he said that something definite could be said only when you have tested it through the Determination method. He suggests that you make a specific Determination ' to re-attain to the Fruit of the Sakadagami Magga ' for a definite period. Please see whether it 'works' as before.

Since you had mentioned that although you now ' get an excellent Samadhi ' it is not of ' the rare quality of Peace ' described in the first half of your letter, he gives you a helpful hint to recapture that significant experience. You should mentally survey the exact approach which helped you to attain that Peace and try the same. He further remarked that normally a good meditator should sort of ' review ' that approach ' taking into account even minor details of posture, food, temperament etc. which served as auxiliary conditions to any special experience he has gone through. This makes it easy to re-arouse Nibbanic bliss which is free from all feeling (avedaita sukha ) - he said.

Finally he re-assures you that he does not consider your letters as a 'nuisance' and that he is always prepared to help the deserving to the best of his ability. As such, you should not hesitate to communicate any development (however frequent ) in your meditation for getting instructions.

Best wishes for your progress!

With metta,

.....

### Letter No 83

25/6/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

So many thanks for the letter dated 22.6.86. I am happy that I may write freely with a clear conscience. As always Your Highness has shown me the utmost consideration in addition to deep spiritual guidance - I would like to speak of 2 experiences which have occurred between my letter of the 17/6/86 and Your Highness's last letter of 22/6/86.

(1) A further experience of the current ( but now no longer a current ). The earlier experiences were inside the body - The next change - It was like water poured outside the body. And now a 3rd change - From being an intermittent current at the start (always rather dramatic) now it has changed its character to a sort of vapor which permeates every cell of the body with a calm happiness.- (together with a sort of pulse beat ) It seems to have taken over the Calmness and Peace of my last experience in meditation ( Peace meditation ) .

This new experience frequently comes and goes when I am sitting still ( with no effort on my part ) It is very restful. ( and may be close to my last meditative experience ? )

Experience ( 2 ) Your Highness in your last ( 22/6/86 ) letter ( I received yesterday ) recommended that for " determining " this last meditation experience, I should try to recollect my earlier doings on that day - Strange to relate that is exactly what i had done, before I received the letter (almost telepathic ! ) - And to my surprise and joy I had captured that wonderful indescribable Peace - My joy was unbounded - There was nothing more I had need of this " nothing more I had need of " had assailed my mind, the first time I had the experience and now the thought repeated itself ).

If I could have this Supreme Peace at my command what more could I want ?  
Everything dissolved into Peace and happiness.

I would like to narrate this " determining " in detail -

(a) I had gone over both Bhavanas of Metta and Peace in detail. Then I imagined I was radiating Calm and Peace in all directions ( universally ) - Next the whole of space was filled with Peace - Everything of the world vanished . The Peace which existed seemed to form a whitish circle - inside which I was a speck - Then I think there were 2 tiny sounds and I broke up and vanished

( 2 tiny sounds perhaps body and mind ? ) So then there was nothing left in the world to think about - and nothing left in my body and mind - Everything had vanished ( including mind ? ) only awareness was left. Nothing to provoke thought - and then there came into existence this unbelievable Truth - This Supreme Experience - Peace.

Can anyone wish for more except its continuity?

How can I every express my gratitude and thanks to Your Highness - What is there that I can say or do - There are no answers - There is a stand still.

From your obedient , grateful and humble pupil.

.....  
All my thanks and gratitude to the Ven. Bikkhu ..... for clarity of placing every thought in its correct perspective which has been an incalculable help. -

#### Letter No 84

26/6/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

There is just one point on which I should welcome some clarification. That is - Until now, the procedure of recalling each of the ' Nanas' in turn followed by the thought " May I attain to the Nibbanic Bliss for 5 minutes " had worked very well ; and by the end of the 9 Nanas the Bliss was firmly established.

But now, as I think on the Peace Formula, the Nibbanic Bliss rises rapidly and gets well established and I feel the 'Nanas' and 5 minute intervals act as an interruption - So I have dropped them for the present, and just think " May I attain this Bliss for half an hour - This appears to work out well and smoothly - but I do not know whether I should continue with the Nanas as well - Please may I know how I should proceed.

Always with my thanks and gratitude an every good wish that Your Highness is in good health.

Your humble and obedient pupil.

.....  
I am studying the virtues of the Buddha as indicated, and find thme truly inspiring.

#### Letter No 85

M.N.V.

29/6/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero is in receipt of your 2 letters dated 25/6 and 26/6. He was much impressed by the description of your experience of the 'current' which shows a very good level of Samadhi. Also the 2nd experience in which you had recaptured your earlier experience, had its own points of interest though you have not mentioned there to what Magga Phala you had 'determined'. (ie. whether it is the 2nd or the 3rd Fruit of the Path). This, he said, you can yourself verify both by 'determining' in the appropriate manner and by introspecting how much of your "samyojanas" (fetters) have been broken down. Since the clarity of your Magga Phala experience could also be due to the high level of Samatha you have gained, the precise determination as to 'where - you - stand - now' is a matter for your own sound judgment - he said.

Regarding the question raised in your second letter, the Venerable Nayaka Thero said that you need not continue going over each of the Nanas, now that you have got the ability to arouse the 'Phala' by merely advertent to it. He said that the former procedure is of value until one gains proficiency in attaining.

Best wishes for your progress!  
with metta,

.....

### Letter No 86

4/7/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

Once again I must extend my warmest thanks for the kind helpful letter of guidance dated 29/6/86. I shall answer the questions in it as well as I am able.

(1) "You have not mentioned to which Magga Phala you had determined".

Answer: Actually I was unsure as to which Magga Phala I should "determine", so I determined in this manner. "May I attain to the last experience I had of infinite Peace and Bliss, for half an hour". I then attempted to recall the experience as well as I could, and then "let go" of everything - The ensuing Phala is very clear now. It is like a sound sleep (where everything vanishes (as in sleep) but there is the awareness of Peace and comfort which is all pervading and in which one rests.

(2) Regarding the Samyojanas - I think I have dropped my attachment to most things - or rather - they have dropped me - Sometimes I am not aware till after the event that I am no longer involved in the way I used to be. I still do my best in everything which has to be done, but I no longer think or worry about the result - I have learnt acceptance - Since I constantly watch my thoughts I try to control them at their inception.

Anicca, Dukkha, Annatta are my guides, and my search is to step out beyond duality to the Oneness of All, where automatically unhappiness is brought to an end - So now my former feeling of being a helpless victim of circumstances is no more - The mind has to be disciplined, till, together with Metta it reaches a state of balance beyond mind's egoity and multiplicity.

(3) I do not know where I stand on the Path and wonder if this is essential? It may be necessary as I would have to be guided accordingly. Whatever experiences come my way, I shall write at once. Perhaps I should mention one which has come to the forefront the last 2 days - It is this. The vapor like current now comes up outside meditation hours - Today as I walked from one shop to another, during my marketing (the walk was a fairly long one) I started practicing the Satman Bavana (walking meditation) and almost immediately the current filled my chest and head while I walked around - The vapor now seems often to strike my head - I feel that even the molecules of my body are being changed in character through this vapor. It is often accompanied by a warm glow.

I also find I suffer from an uncomfortable feeling if I am touched - even at a lecture hall where chairs are placed too closely together I suffer acute discomfort. I wonder why this should be?

All my good wishes and thanks to Your Highness and the Ven. ....

Your humble, obedient and devoted pupil.

.....

P.S. I send an envelope in case there are any new instructions i should follow.

### Letter No 87

M.N.V.

6/7/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero received your letter of the 4th. By way of instructions, he said that it is advisable to have a clear understanding of your present position on the Path. This you could easily do by determining first to the Sakadagami Phala for a short period ( as already mentioned in an earlier letter ) and if it does not work , by determining to Anagami Phala. He says it is essential too, if one is bent on ' mastering ' ( vasita ) one's attainment of the Phala and of course, for further progress as well. He recommends shorter spells of attainment ( say, 10 mts. , 15 mits. ) rather than longer periods for the purpose of this mastery

As to the samyojanas, he says you should observe your mental behavior in your daily life and find out whether your reactions to objects , events and persons show traces of attachment or aversion ( at least an irritation ) . As you know, the Anagami Magga does away with all latencies to lust ( raga ) and hate ( patigha ) . You may also scrutinize it to see whether the ' acute discomfort ' you had mentioned about, stems from some traces of irritation.

Best wishes for your progress!

with metta

.....

### Letter No 88

12/7/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

My grateful thanks for the letter of 6/7/86 with carefully tabled instructions. I shall try to answer some of the questions which have been in doubt so far.

(1) It is when I determine to the Anagami Phala that I get the good result. ( the Sakadagami level seems, altogether, something of the past ).

(2) As Your Highness wished, I have started trying to sort out the Jhanas ( vasitas) although this is a new field of activity for me. Earlier I just went along, without classification etc. ( about this I will write when I have gone further )

(3) Regarding the Samyojanas ;

(a) The desire for worldly things I think I may have overcome - Since I get more and more forgetful of my worldly life - I do everything I have to do, as well as I can, after which they go out of my mind, ( which is turned towards the Dhamma always ) . I forget worldly things I do, sometimes alarmingly so. e.g. One night after dinner at my brother's home, I drove a guest back to her home and then returned to my home. Withing a few hours I had forgotten the incident entirely - The next morning there was not a trace of it in my mind.

But this does not happen with the Dhamma which is in my mind between all the events of the day - Now wherever I go the talk always drifts to the Dhamma - The rest of the talk is like an illusion or a passing light shower of rain which barely touches the surface.

Another new characteristic is that I am content with very little - Content all the time - So then I am not angry or upset - I think I have advanced this way as never before - If things go wrong I seek an adjustment - ( very calmly ) if the adjustment proves not in order - I am not upset- I understand acceptance now.

I think it is the newly acquired Peace and Calm which is the root of this change in character.

(4) The irritability which springs up - where there is a close contact with human beings ( as sitting too close at a lecture ) - or a cat or dog, who will invariably choose me, out of a room full of people, and sit close to my feet - is a feeling that vibrations circulating in my system are put into a state of disorder and I am aware of my inability to set things right unless I move away.

(5) Finally - a summary of the diagnosis of myself ( most difficult but something which has to be accomplished ).

During the last month since I had the vision of the Disappearance of everything into a state of Peace, I think I have made unusual Progress. A progress which may be I could describe in 4 words.

(1) Perfect acceptance (2) contentment (3) Freedom (4) Joy.

I want nothing - because I have everything ( I wish for ). I feel like a bird released from its cage - untrammelled - Free - Free as mountain air - Yes, that is the word - Freed Freedom !

My very sincere thanks to Your Highness and the Ven. .... for the extra-ordinary help and kindness shown me. I also send my good wishes.

Your humble, obedient and ever grateful pupil.

.....

### Letter No 89

15/7/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

Following up my last letter of 12/7/86 there has been a further development which I think I should mention. It is as follows; As I commence my meditation, before I can go far, all sorts of happenings in my life, from childhood to adulthood rush up in my mind. This must be from the sub-conscious level. Now, I just say "drop it" as each thought comes up, and I find they dissolve immediately. They cannot house in my mind or worry me any more. What a wonderful experience of freedom. This is a special recent development. I feel it to be like a power - I am in control and no longer a pawn driven around. As I think about it, I feel it is built up of a combination of understanding and Metta which produces an equanimity - This equanimity then produces a power unknowable in quality which perhaps is something which controls - the balance of a tightrope walker perhaps.

My son ..... is here for a time. He too has had similar experiences to myself which I find interesting.

My experiences have arrived as a result of hard work - his , has come naturally from his youth on - but he has kept them to himself as they appeared peculiar to him ( Since no one else had had similar experiences )

With my best good wishes always. Remembering also the Ven. ....

Your obedient , grateful and humble pupil.

.....

### Letter No 90

M.N.V.

19/7/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero is in receipt of your letters dated 12/7 and 15/7. He listened to their contents with much admiration and was particularly glad that you have succeeded in attaining Anagami Phala. As he had remarked on some previous occasions too, he observed that your letters are worthy of being neatly typed out and preserved with a view to publication at some future date. We do hope you will have no objection if such a venture materializes. He also wants you to preserve his replies to your letters for the same purpose.

Regarding your 'NEXT - STEP' he wants me to clarify a few points for you in advance. Anagami Phala is generally believed to be the limit of spiritual development for a lay devotee as Arahathship is not compatible with household life. However, there have been instances of lay- people attaining Arahathship on their death - bed (eg. King Suddhodana ) Whatever it may mean, the Venerable Nayaka Thero draws your attention to another avenue of development for you, taking a hint from some of your experiences mentioned in your second letter. He wonders whether those childhood memories which flash into your mind have anything to do with possible success in the field of ' abhinna ' ( Higher knowledges ) accessible to an anagami who is an adept in Samadhi. The knowledge of one's former lives can be aroused by systematically tracing one's memories to the embryonic stage and beyond, by an act of will, having arisen from the Fourth Jhana which serves as the base for abhinna since it has perfect equanimity and one - pointedness. So you could ' experiment ' in this direction as well.

Best wishes for your success! Your achievements so far, deserve the highest commendation. with metta

.....

### Letter No 91

M.N.V.

22/7/86

Dear Dayika,

As mentioned in my letter of the 19th ( which you must have received by now ) we are taking steps to get your valuable letters typed out and arranged in book form. If you could kindly send us the Venerable Nayaka Thero's letters of instructions, ( by registered post ) it could make the book more intelligible. We shall return them to you after making a typed copy. The Venerable Thero has suggested that once we have arranged them in book form, a number of photo -stat copies be made, so that the book will become a source of inspiration to many meditators both lay and monks.

With metta

.....

### Letter No 92

25/7/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

The letter dated 19/7/86 has arrived and I am indeed delighted with its contents - especially that Your Highness is pleased with the progress made by a pupil he has so kindly, patiently and conscientiously trained over the last 7 years - It is this teaching which is so rare - Since every student is a different personality, the training which suits one may well be out of gear for another - So I think it is this insight which can pin-point the exact requirements of each individual student, which is the secret of success ( together with of course diligence and

a perpetual deep interest on the part of the pupil). I offer to Your Highness an abiding gratitude, devotion and regard.

(1) I am also very happy at the thought of the possibility of a book that may prove of some assistance to others.

(2) About the Abhinna, I feel a trifle doubtful of my capabilities but nevertheless, I should like to talk to Your Highness about this since the idea is new to me.

(3) However, where I do feel a confidence, is in the continued following of the present Path on which I now stand - I feel it opening up new vistas, wide and without boundaries - This is no longer a visionary state, but an actual physical dissolution into another state of matter ( electrical vapor) with a limitless spread. This movement has only just commenced - Indeed I have only sensed its initial stage - ( in fact I cannot say I am completely sure of what I describe ) . But I am watching its development, and I will write again, if I am sure of its progress - This may be slow, as ..... my son is building a house for himself on the premises and there is much noise and bustle - not conducive to concentration.

My grateful thanks to the Ven. .... for the English translation of the thoughts ( of Your Highness ) into words - ( no easy task ! ) to enable me to clearly understand , before I could translate them into a living form whereby a spiritual growth could be achieved.

With every good wish from your devoted, humble and obedient pupil.

.....  
P.S. The second letter regarding Your Highness's letters to me has arrived and I shall see to this immediately.

### letter No 93

31/7/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

I posted under Registered cover, photostats of all Your Highness's letters to me, last monday and hope they arrived safely. I had a further experience 2 days ago at 3 a.m. in the morning after about 40 minutes of Anapana.

(1) My entire body was filled with an electric vapor -until the flesh and blood body disappeared totally. In its place was a body made of vapor - There seemed no outer skin to hold it in place) as in the physical body ) - and I felt at any moment it could disintegrate into space - But it was all very pleasant and my mind very clear - Of one thing I was certain - There was no breathing (no anapana ) at all - After it was over, I began to wonder if death occurred in this fashion. If so it is very calm and pleasant - Just a change of form from physical to an electric form.

I am curious to know what this experience indicates, since it is something which is the result of an earlier , slow development I think.

With my deep gratitude always for everything Your Highness has done to help me to come to this stage of development.

Your humble, obedient and profoundly grateful pupil.

### Letter No 94

M.N.V.

3/8/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero has received your letter of 31/7. Your earlier letter and the Regd. parcel were also received, and a letter of acknowledgment was posted a few days ago.

Regarding your latest experience in meditation, the Venerable Nayaka Thero has the following explanation to offer:

'Your samadhi - level has reached the stage of the 4th Jhana in which there is no breathing'. The disappearance of the gross body and its replacement by an ethereal one ( ' body made of vapour ' ) shows that your consciousness is now tending towards the Arupa Samapatti , the fist of which is that of ' Bound-lessness or infiniteness of space ' ( akasanancayatana ). You have already sensed it ( ' I felt at any moment it could disintegrate into space ' ) . It is advisable however, to master the 4th Jhana by proper attention to its contents - equanimity, one pointedness and consciousness. The object of the First Arupa Samapatti is the Boundlessness of Space, as stated above, and the next steps which are subtler might also occur without much effort, once you have mastered the 4th Jhana.

It seems you have already given us a fitting title for the book under preparation ( by chance) in a phrase of your own coinage, ' Freed - freedom ' . The last lines in some of the photo-stat letter copies are missing. We shall be thankful if you could clarify them in your next letter. The dates of the letters in question are given below.

Best wishes for your progress!  
with metta

.....

### Letter No 95

5/8/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

I have been thinking about Your Highness's letter dated 19/7/86 regarding the Abhinna and that may be I might experiment in that direction as well.

I feel now that I have emerged from a somewhat confused inner understanding to a level of much greater clarity of vision. My feet feel firmly set on the Path ( the wobbling has ceased! ) I watch the growth of spiritual understanding ( the oneness of all ) simultaneous with the development of metta and with this comes a compelling joy and strength - The compulsion is to give every ounce of my attention wholly to this, turning in no other direction, for the present. May I have Your Highness's consent to this suggestion ? Should However, it be better, if I could follow the Abhinna as well - would most happily try to do so - ( It may be laziness of old age - that I shirk taking it on !! ) -The problem is that I seem to be going 2 ways, simultaneously as it is ?

(1) The radiation from the heart ( accompanied always by heat ) which fills the body and spreads outwards into space - the mind resting in Peace and happiness for about 1/2 an hour or more. The radiation comes unexpectedly without my thinking of it. Sometimes it flares up after a good nights rest - I am taken by surprise - There has not been time to think !

(2) The Anagami Phala comes during Anapana meditation - This cool resting is the Bliss of Anagami Phala - there again one is filled with the electric vapour which appears to spread outward into space - The mind tranquil and happy.

These 2 streams which appear different but have close similarities may in time link up I feel (?) I feel free from toil now, somehow - Again I must stress the word freed since I have never known the meaning of it before.

My eternal thanks to Your Highness for this priceless gift bestowed on me. With my best wishes and thanks and remembrances to Your Highness and the Ven. ....

Your humble and obedient pupil.

.....

**Letter No 96**

M.N.V.

8/8/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero has received your letters dated 2/8 and 5/8. In regards to your present problem arising out of his suggestion of abhinna (.....' I seem to be going 2 ways simultaneously ' .....) he says that the two are not really incompatible or at variance with each other, but rather complementary. He of course grants that everyone is not capable of attaining the 6 abhinnas. ( some attain only 3 ) His suggestion is that you may devote sufficient time and attention to both aspects - Samatha and Vipassana so that you could reap the fruits of both. Since you have the 4th Jhana, he is of the opinion that the abhinnas are within easy reach of you. (If necessary, you could get a general acquaintance with the mode of approach from discourses like Samannaphala Sutta ( Digha Nikaya ) , Maha Vacchagotta Sutta , Maha Assapura Sutta etc. ( Majjhima Nikaya ) and from the Visuddhimagga).

For the present, we hope to make a few photo-stat copies of the collection of the letters once it is typed out. If some help is needed even for this, we shall let you know.

Best wishes for your progress

With metta

.....

**Letter No 97**

12/8/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

The letter dated 8/8/86 has arrived and I shall endeavor to work at both Samatha and Vipassana Paths. I have already borrowed the Visuddhimagga ( which Your Highness considered would be of help ) and have commenced reading the parts relevant to Abhinnas. Funnily I feel I have an affinity towards (1) Reading the minds of others and (2) The ear - ( as these seem to belong to one range of mind which seems touched by intuition but not memory). Seeing former births requires ( I should imagine ) the memory factor strongly developed as well. This may be my weak link - Nevertheless I shall try - There is nothing like trying persistently and with effort!!

When I have studied the suggested books, I should be most grateful if I am allowed to come to Mitirigala for further instructions - I am enclosing a photostat-copy of the letter dated 3/8/86 as suggested.

With many many thanks for letters of instructions as well as the translation.

Your grateful, humble and obedient pupil

.....

**Letter No 98**

M.N.V.

15/8/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero has received your letter of 12/8 as also the previous one giving the missing lines in photostat copies.

Regarding your observations about the potentiality for abhinna, he suggests that you should do well to build up your ' weak ' sati in the following manner :

"After rising from your Phala Samapatti or from the 4th Jhana try to trace back in memory all events of the day and if you succeed, try the same with the events of the previous day and so on".

He said that the memories of childhood you had referred to in an earlier letter, could have been evoked by vipassana meditation too. For the purpose of seeing your former lives, a more systematic training in ' sati ' is necessary.

As you wish to come to Mitirigala to get further instructions, the Venerable Nayaka Thero said that you may inform him of the date of your visit in due course.

With best wishes for your progress.

with metta

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### Letter No 99

21/8/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

I have been studying the Visuddhimagga ( very interesting and detailed ) and have gathered knowledge from which may flow ideas -

(1) In the field of meditation I go through the 4 Jhanas with special attention to the 4th ( as Your Highness advised )

(2) I seek as well the Anagami Phala Peace - and

(3) The further development of Metta Bavana

(4) The cultivation of the Paramitas

(5) The study of Anatta, which has become for me a living , expanding growth of understanding.

(6) I have not embarked yet on attempting a search regarding my last birth - What I gather through books is that I have to go back in memory, all my doings for a day - then day by day backwards - for a week - a year etc. I do not think I have this capacity - But I am not despondent either - So far, most understanding that has come to me has arrived in ' Flashes " ( as a result of study and thought ) I find it difficult to go back in memory deliberately - for, my life in the thought world, has been, of recent months somewhat unusual - Whatever householder's work I have to do, I do and immediately afterwards I have made it a point to forget it, and to turn my mind inwards and to the Dhamma - There my mind gets fixed - Now this has become a habit and it works well in my case - But , to recall days and weeks of this remembering - forgetting process is scarcely possible I think - Hence my some-what pessimistic attitude ! However one can never be certain of how things may work out - There is always the possibility of the 'flash'

New Experiences

(1) I find the following happens more and more outside meditation hours. It came about this way.

As I sat down to have my cup of tea one morning after a night's good rest, I found a powerful heart beat arise. I sat quiet - The beat continued, then rose to my head - A warm glow filled my face and head which was very pleasant. This remained as long as I was silent and still - When the silence was broken it disappeared. After my tea I sat down quietly on the veranda to recall the incident, when to my surprise it repeated itself, and I seemed to keep it as long as I wished - Now I find it comes often, outside meditation hours - I wonder if this experience is connected with that during meditation, when the heart functions similarly and is accompanied by a great heat and perspiring - This new movement is gentler and concentrates itself over the face and head. I feel a burning sensation in the eyes and pinpricks over my scalp and face - ( only at the commencement though )

(2) While in the 4th Jhana, I experienced the following - The breathing becomes abnormal - I feel some other body is breathing on my behalf ( I can not say if it is inside my body or outside )

(b) Next I feel the heart takes over the function of breathing.

(3) I attain a stage of Peace and stillness like a sleep but with awareness

(4) As I come out of this state I realize the whole body is cold ( like a corpse ). The eyelids do not open at once, ( but do so gradually ). I have to cover myself as I have lost body heat -

I am eager to know if I am working correctly on the 4th Jhana - The Anagami Phala is now stable - They both lead to a state of Peace but cannot say if they are identical.

As I was writing this letter your kind letter of the 15/8/86 arrived by post - I think most of the questions have been answered.

Please may I come to visit Your Highness any day after the 15th of September that may be suitable?

I have never felt so happy or safe as I do now with the Dhamma for support - Truly wonderful - Nothing any longer which can shake or disturb - I think this must be what is called a miracle.

With all my thanks and good wishes to Your Highness and the Ven. ....

The grateful, humble and obedient pupil

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**Letter No 100**

M.N.V.

26/8/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero has received your letter of the 21st. He explains your new experience

(1) 'outside meditation hours', as a re-experience of a samadhi you have already attained. There is nothing unusual about it since you are now able to arouse sufficient calm and concentration even over a 'cup of tea' to allow that level of samadhi to creep in. Regarding the stages in the attainment of the 4th Jhana which you had listed, he remarked that they do come in as you have not mastered that Jhana to be able to attain it immediately ( ie. without preliminaries ). The reason why your body becomes cold ( ' like a corpse ' ) while you are in the 4th Jhana , is that your breathing, (which keeps the body warm ) has ceased ; and so he suggests that when you rise from that Jhana you should warm up your limbs ( by rubbing etc. ) before getting up.

As you are looking forward to visiting him, the Venerable Nayaka Thero gives the date - 18th Sept. ( Thursday ) .

Best wishes for your progress!

with metta

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**Letter No 101**

31/8/86

Most Honoured and Revered Sir,

My grateful thanks for the letter dated 26/8/86

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P.S. I continue with an account of 2 recent experiencesm

(1) I had been meditating a while, (about 2.30 a.m. ) , when I began to hear a song of music, and a jumble of other sounds surrounding this. - The song was loud and clear and disturbed, my meditation - I listened awhile hoping it would cease - But it did not . I tried once more to meditate, but failed - Finally I got up, and as I did so the noise vanished - I then started my meditation, and once again, up came the same arrangement of sound - I listened, then got up again - and once again the noise ceased - not instantly, but gradually - since there is nothing in the area where I live to account for such a display of sound - I wondered if this was some development of the Inner Ear - I also found that the electric current which used to fill the body and chest (but only infrequently filled the head ),now comes in a complete way, filling neck, head and arms to the finger tips. It feels like a process of transformation.

Experience 2 :- I had been concentrating for sometime on both the 4th Jhana as well as the Space Arupa Jhana. The experience occurred as usual about 3 a.m. The previous day I had taken my car for repairs at 8 a.m. to a garage at ..... . There I sat till 12.30 noon before the completion of repairs - It was a lovely morning with clear blue sky and I sat on a stool watching the dismantling of the car. After a while I commenced reading the notes I had put together regarding the Dhamma (which I always carry in my hand bag. ) When I had mastered some of the thoughts contained in the notes ( principally Anatta ) I turned my attention to a stretch of beautiful blue sky and commenced to meditate on " Boundless Space " . It was a good period of meditation although sitting on a stool was not comfortable - After seeing to some further work that evening I had a good night's rest - Almost as soon as I woke and commenced my meditation I felt drawn upwards into space - There was no body, no mind, no current, no dissolving - nothing. I had become 'space' and was drawn into "Boundless Space"- The awareness was one of utmost Joy- Pure, reasonless, weightless joy - There was nothing else- I am wondering whether the experience could be connected with the 1st Arupa Jhana - Boundless Space ? It is the most pure experience I have yet had. With the other experiences the mind and body were reflected always in some subtle form : which ( only now I realize ) made them weighted and matter bound in comparison.

With best wishes

Your grateful obedient and humble pupil.

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### Letter No 102

M.N.V.

5/9/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero has received your letters dated 31/8. About your meditation experience (1) he observed that such hearing of a jumble of sounds ( song and music etc.) is an experience common to less developed meditators too, and is more of a distraction rather than an actual stage in the development of meditation. But he confirms your experience (2) as the First Arupa Jhana of Boundlessness of Space.

He suggests that you now concentrate more on attaining all the 4 Arupa Jhanas. You can stabilize the First Arupa Jhana by attending to the 'nimitta' of the open sky you have acquired.

Best wishes for your progress!

with metta

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### Letter No 103

9/9/86

Most Honoured and revered Sir,

My sincerest thanks for the letter of 5/9/86. I think it a splendid idea to add a paragraph or more to the preface - It would make the whole book doubly interesting and instructive.

The above idea initiated a further thought - ( although I do not know its feasibility ) it is this:

(1) Could the letters be divided, say into three groups in chronological order and showing as well, the gradual development of a meditator.

(2) Each section could be introduced by a paragraph of the theoretical aspect of meditation ; followed by the group of letters to show the training in practice.

Although I put forward this idea as something which jumped into my head - it may not be practicable. Nevertheless I thought I would mention it, as I find many sincere meditators have never heard of terms such as Vasitha etc. ( nor had I ! ) and 3 small essays on the lesser known aspects of meditation maybe of sincere interest and help towards a progress. The start of meditation is always good - but the progress is delayed by a lack of knowledge of what to do next? and how?

Regarding my meditation, I do not know how to proceed after the attainment of "Boundless Space" ( no doubt I am wrong ) but to me the 4 Arup Jhanas appear as one. As soon as the first is achieved one has attained to the heart of all Four.

This is how I see them.

(1) If Boundless Space is recognized and nothing else besides, Then

(2) The consciousness which recognizes must be of a similar caliber - boundless too.

(3) Since space pervades everything - there is nothing else - ( boundless nothing )

(4) Then there is realization of nothing ( of the world of formations ) which means no perception - as well as an awareness of this( which equals perception) . So there is neither perception nor non perception.

I think I must be wrong in these assumptions but do not know.

With best wishes to Your Highness and the Ven. ....

Your humble, grateful and obedient pupil.

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P.S. Have had another experience. It was while meditating on this Peace of Anagami Phala. After about 15 minutes meditation, this peace which had so far been restricted to my small self seemed to burst through and combine with Boundless Space which was my true self - A greater and more perfect all embracing Peace.

Shall be at Mitirigala on 18/9/86 about 8.30 a.m.

#### Letter No 104

M.N.V.

12/9/86

Dear Dayika,

The Venerable Nayaka Thero has received your letter of the 9th instant. He agrees with you in your analysis of the 4 Arupa Jhanas, from the practical point of view. As such you need

not entertain any doubts as to ' how to proceed ' . He was also appreciative of your experience of the 'Phala' through the higher level of Samadhi you have now attained.

Best wishes for your progress.

with metta

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