Right Mindfulness

In

Early Buddhism

(4) *Satipaṭṭhāna* is all about direct observation: *anupassanā/vipassanā*

(1) Imagination: contemplating the 31 parts of the body.
(2) Inferential knowledge: there are two kinds of knowledge, experiential (*dhamma ñāṇa*) and inferential (*anvaya ñāṇa*). Inferential knowledge is about the future and the past, especially future and past lives, and other people.

Satipaṭṭhāna is all about direct observation: *anupassanā/vipassanā*

(3) Retrospective insight:
“ … a monastic … enters and remains in the first absorption …
They contemplate the phenomena there—form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness—as impermanent, as suffering … as not-self.” (MN 64)
= Ānāpānasati Sutta

(5) Breath meditation belongs to body contemplation

In Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta breath meditation is only found with body contemplation:
“And how does a monastic meditate observing an aspect of the body?
It’s when a mendicant … sits down cross-legged … Just mindful, they breathe in. Mindful, they breathe out.” (MN 10)

Breath meditation belongs to body contemplation

But in the Ānāpānasati Sutta breath meditation covers all four *satipaṭṭhānas*: "Mindfulness of breathing, when developed and cultivated, fulfills the four *satipaṭṭhānas* ..."
(MN 118)

Breath meditation belongs to body contemplation

Breath meditation in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta: comparison of sources

Pali Satip. Sutta	Sarvāsti-vāda	Ekāyana Sūtra	Prajñā-pāramitā	Vibhaṇga	Dharma-skandha	Śāriputr-ābhidharm
=	=	≠	=	≠	≠	=

Breath meditation belongs to body contemplation

We can conclude that breath meditation does not belong under body contemplation in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta.

How?

Because breath meditation belongs to all four *satipaṭṭhānas*.

(6) *Satipaṭṭhāna* is to be practiced in everyday life

The Postures

"Furthermore, when you are walking you know: 'I am walking.' When standing … when sitting … when lying down you know: 'I am lying down.' Whatever posture your body is in, you know it."

Satipaṭṭhāna is to be practiced in everyday life

Full Awareness

"Furthermore, one acts with full awareness when going out and coming back; when looking ahead and aside; when bending and extending the limbs; when bearing the outer robe, bowl and robes; when eating, drinking, chewing, and tasting; when urinating and defecating; when walking, standing, sitting, sleeping, waking, speaking, and keeping silent."

Satipaṭṭhāna is to be practiced in everyday life

The four postures in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta: comparison of sources

Pali Satip. Sutta	Sarvāsti-vāda	Ekāyana Sūtra	Prajñā-pāramitā	Vibhaṇga	Dharma-skandha	Śāriputr-ābhidharm
=	=	≠	=	≠	≠	=

We can conclude that the four postures do not belong to the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta.

Satipaṭṭhāna is to be practiced in everyday life

Full awareness in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta: comparison of sources

Pali Satip. Sutta	Sarvāsti-vāda	Ekāyana Sūtra	Prajñā-pāramitā	Vibhaṇga	Dharma-skandha	Śāriputr-ābhidharm
=	=	≠	=	≠	≠	=

We can conclude that full awareness does not belong to the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta.

Satipaṭṭhāna is to be practiced in everyday life

So where does full awareness belong?

The *suttas* distinguish between mindfulness (*sati*) and full awareness (*sampajaññā*):

"Wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*) >
Full awareness >
Sense restraint >
Morality >
Satipaṭṭhāna"
(AN 10.61)

Satipaṭṭhāna is to be practiced in everyday life

So where does full awareness belong?

In the gradual training leading up to *satipaṭṭhāna*:

Morality >
Contentment >
Sense restraint >
Full awareness >
Seclusion >
Meditation + abandoning the five hindrances = *satipaṭṭhāna*. (MN 27)

Satipaṭṭhāna is to be practiced in everyday life

So full awareness (*sampajaññā*) comes before *satipaṭṭhāna* and is an aspect of right effort.

The idea of practicing meditation, *satipaṭṭhāna*, in daily life has no basis in the *suttas*.

Meditation in daily life is based on the problematic idea that you become mindful by being mindful.

What is required in daily life is sufficient mindfulness to enable effective sense restraint.

This also opens up a new way of translating the standard formula for full awareness:

Satipaṭṭhāna is to be practiced in everyday life

"One acts with full awareness when going out and coming back; when looking ahead and aside; when bending and extending the limbs; when bearing the outer robe, bowl and robes; when eating, drinking, chewing, and tasting; when urinating and defecating; when walking, standing, sitting, sleeping, waking, speaking, and keeping silent."

Satipaṭṭhāna is to be practiced in everyday life

"One acts with full awareness when going out and coming back; when looking ahead and aside; when bending and extending the limbs; when bearing the outer robe, bowl and robes; when eating, drinking, chewing, and tasting; when urinating and defecating; when walking, standing, sitting, sleeping, waking, speaking, and keeping silent."

"One has full awareness concerning going out and coming back; concerning looking ahead and aside; concerning bending and extending the limbs; concerning bearing the outer robe, bowl and robes; concerning eating, drinking, chewing, and tasting; concerning urinating and defecating; concerning walking, standing, sitting, sleeping, waking, speaking, and keeping silent."

(7) *Satipaṭṭhāna* includes watching pain

Contemplating feelings in Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta:

"… When they feel a painful feeling, they know: 'I feel a painful feeling.' …

When they feel a worldly painful feeling, they know: 'I feel a worldly painful feeling.'"
(MN10)

Satipaṭṭhāna includes watching pain

Contemplating feelings in Ānāpānasati Sutta:

"They practice breathing in/out experiencing rapture. They practice breathing in/out experiencing bliss. They practice breathing in/out experiencing these emotions. They practice breathing in/out stilling these emotions.

Whenever one practices these things, at that time one meditates contemplating an aspect of feelings …" (MN 118)

Satipaṭṭhāna includes watching pain

It is clear from the Ānāpānasati Sutta that one does not need to contemplate painful feelings directly, see discussion on *anupassanā*.

Instead they can be contemplated though their absence.

This is a much more powerful way of contemplating them because you see the three characteristics with full force.

Summary of myths/misconceptions

1. *Satipaṭṭhāna* develops mindfulness
2. You are either mindful or you are not
3. *Satipaṭṭhāna* is “the one and only way”
4. *Satipaṭṭhāna* is all about direct observation: *anupassanā/vipassanā*
5. Breath meditation belongs to body contemplation
6. *Satipaṭṭhāna* is to be practiced in everyday life
7. *Satipaṭṭhāna* includes watching pain.

THE END