Right Mindfulness

In

Early Buddhism

Contemplation of the six sense spheres

Comparison of sources

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

Contemplation of the six sense spheres

“It’s when a monastic understands the eye, sights, and the fetter that arises dependent on both of these. They understand how the fetter arises;
They understand how the fetter is abandoned;
And they understand how the abandoned fetter does not rise again in the future.”

Contemplation of the six sense spheres

“The eye is not the fetter (*saṃyojana*) of forms nor are forms the fetter of the eye, but rather the desire and want (*chandarāga*) that arise in dependence on both: that is the fetter there.
(SN 36.232)

Contemplation of the six sense spheres

“It’s when a monastic understands the ear, sounds … the nose, smells … the tongue, tastes … the body, touches … the mind, thoughts, and the fetter that arises dependent on both.
They understand how the fetter that has not arisen comes to arise;
They understand how the arisen fetter comes to be abandoned;
And they understand how the abandoned fetter comes to not rise again in the future.”

Contemplation of the seven factors of awakening

Comparison of sources

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

Contemplation of the seven factors of awakening

“It’s when a monastic who has the awakening factor of mindfulness in them understands: ‘I have the awakening factor of mindfulness in me.’ When they don’t have the awakening factor of mindfulness in them, they understand: ‘I don’t have the awakening factor of mindfulness in me.’ They understand how the awakening factor of mindfulness that has not arisen comes to arise; And they understand how the awakening factor of mindfulness that has arisen becomes fulfilled by development.”

Contemplation of the seven factors of awakening

“It’s when a monastic who has the awakening factor of investigation of principles … energy … rapture … tranquility … stillness … equanimity in them understands: ‘I have the awakening factor of mindfulness in me.’

When they don’t have the awakening factor of equanimity in them, they understand: ‘I don’t have the awakening factor of equanimity in me.’

They understand how the awakening factor of equanimity that has not arisen comes to arise;

And they understand how the awakening factor of equanimity that has arisen becomes fulfilled by development.”

5 hindrances vs. 7 factors of awakening

“These five hindrances are destroyers of sight, vision, and knowledge. They block wisdom, they’re on the side of anguish, and they don’t lead to Nibbāna. What five? Sensual desire, ill will, dullness and drowsiness, restlessness and remorse, and doubt. These seven awakening factors are creators of vision and knowledge. They grow wisdom, they’re on the side of solace, and they lead to Nibbāna.
What seven? The awakening factors of mindfulness, investigation of principles, energy, rapture, tranquility, stillness, and equanimity.” (SN 46.37)

5 hindrances vs. 7 factors of awakening

"Monastics, please give up the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*)—corruptions of the heart that weaken wisdom—and truly develop the seven awakening factors (*bojjhaṅga*)." (SN 46.52)

"All the perfected ones, fully awakened Buddhas—past, future, or present—give up the five hindrances, corruptions of the heart that weaken wisdom.
Then with their mind firmly established in the four kinds of mindfulness meditation,
they correctly develop the seven awakening factors.
And they wake up to the supreme perfect awakening." (SN47.12)

Contemplation of the four noble truths

Comparison of sources

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

Contemplation of the four noble truths

“And how does a monastic meditate contemplating the four noble truths? It’s when a monastic truly understands: ‘This is suffering’ … ‘This is the origin of suffering’ … ‘This is the cessation of suffering’ … ‘This is the practice that leads to the cessation of suffering.’”

Contemplation of principles: Comparison of sources

	Pali	Sarvāsti-vāda	Ekāyana Sūtra	Prajñā-pāramitā	Vibhaṅga	Dharma-skandha	Śāriputr-ābhidharma
5 hindrances	=	=	=	≠	=	=	=
5 aggregates	=	≠	≠	≠	≠	≠	≠
6 sense spheres	=	=	≠	≠	≠	=	=
7 factors of awakening	=	=	=	≠	=	=	=
4 noble truths	=	≠	≠	≠	≠	≠	=

Contemplation of principles: hindrances
Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta vs. Ānāpānasati Sutta

Satipaṭṭhāna		Ānāpānasati
Understanding the presence of a hindrance Understanding the absence of a hindrance		
Understanding how the hindrance arises	=	They practice breathing, observing impermanence
Understanding how the hindrance is given up	<	They practice breathing, observing fading away They practice breathing, observing cessation
Understand how the hindrance doesn't arise again in the future.	=	They practice breathing, observing letting go.

Contemplation of principles:
Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta vs. Ānāpānasati Sutta

Satipaṭṭhāna		Ānāpānasati
Understanding the presence of a hindrance Understanding the absence of a hindrance		
Understanding how the hindrance arises	=	They practice breathing, observing impermanence
Understanding how the hindrance is given up	<	They practice breathing, observing fading away They practice breathing, observing cessation
Understand how the hindrance doesn't arise again in the future.	=	They practice breathing, observing letting go.

Contemplation of principles: awakening factors
Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta vs. Ānāpānasati Sutta

Satipaṭṭhāna

Understanding the presence of the awakening factor
Understanding the absence of the awakening factor
Understanding the arising of the awakening factor
Understanding how the awakening factor becomes fulfilled by development

Ānāpānasati

They practice breathing, observing impermanence
They practice breathing, observing fading away
They practice breathing, observing cessation
They practice breathing, observing letting go.

Contemplation of principles: awakening factors
Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta vs. Ānāpānasati Sutta

Satipaṭṭhāna	Ānāpānasati
Understanding the presence of the awakening factor	
Understanding the absence of the awakening factor	
Understanding the arising of the awakening factor	They practice breathing, observing impermanence
Understanding how the awakening factor becomes fulfilled by development	They practice breathing, observing fading away They practice breathing, observing cessation They practice breathing, observing letting go.

All four *satipaṭṭhānas*: Satipaṭṭhāna vs. Ānāpānasati

Satipaṭṭhāna		Ānāpānasati
Body contemplation: 31 parts of the body	↔	Knowing the heavy breath Knowing the light breath Experiencing the whole breath Calming the breath
Feeling contemplation: Pleasant/unpleasant Spiritual/worldly	=	Experiencing rapture Experiencing bliss Experiencing these emotions Calming these emotions
Mind contemplation: Defiled/pure Spiritual/worldly	=	Experiencing the mind Gladdening the mind Stilling the mind Freeing the mind

All four *satipaṭṭhānas*: Satipaṭṭhāna vs. Ānāpānasati

Satipaṭṭhāna

Contemplation of hindrances:

Presence, absence, arising, giving up, future non-arising

Ānāpānasati

{ Observing impermanence
Observing fading away
Observing cessation
Observing letting go

All four *satipaṭṭhānas*: Satipaṭṭhāna vs. Ānāpānasati

Satipaṭṭhāna		Ānāpānasati
Contemplation of awakening factors:		
Presence, absence, arising, fulfilment by development	≈	Observing impermanence Observing fading away Observing cessation Observing letting go

Summary

Gradual development of *satipaṭṭhāna*

This is best seen through breath meditation

Breath meditation is what holds it all together and gives it a firm anchor

The content of the *suttas* is diminished because of misconceptions, making *satipaṭṭhāna* much less profound than it actually is. Then *samādhi* and everything else are also diminished, reducing the Dhamma to a lesser teaching, not leading to liberation.

Conclusion of Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta

“If you develop these four applications of mindfulness this way for seven years can expect one of two results: awakening in the present life, or if there’s anything left over, non-return.

Let alone seven years, if you develop these four applications of mindfulness in this way for six years … five … four … three … two years … one year … seven months … six … five … four … three … two months … one month … a fortnight … Let alone a fortnight, anyone who develops these four kinds of mindfulness meditation in this way for seven days can expect one of two results:
awakening in the present life, or if there’s something left over, non-return.

Conclusion of Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta

“Let alone seven years, if you develop these four applications of mindfulness in this way for six years … five … four … three … two years … one year … seven months … six … five … four … three … two months … one month … a fortnight … Let alone a fortnight, anyone who develops these four kinds of mindfulness meditation in this way for seven days can expect one of two results: awakening in the present life, or if there’s something left over, non-return.”

Conclusion of Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta

“‘The four applications of mindfulness are the path to convergence. They are in order to purify sentient beings, to get past sorrow and crying, to make an end of pain and sadness, to end the cycle of suffering, and to realize extinguishment.’ That’s what I said, and this is why I said it.”

That is what the Buddha said. Satisfied, the monastics were happy with what the Buddha said.

Summary of entire course

To understand *satipaṭṭhāna* you need to read the *suttas* widely

Morality and right view are what enable *satipaṭṭhāna*

Satipaṭṭhāna is about meditation, which requires mindfulness

Summary of entire course

Satipaṭṭhāna develops *samatha* and *vipassanā*, leading to *samādhi*

Breath meditation is the main *sutta* approach to all *satipaṭṭhāna* practice

Satipaṭṭhāna + *samādhi* brings about awakening.

THE END