

***Sammāsamādhi* (right stillness) Workshop: *jhāna* in Early Buddhism**

Dates: 26/11/22, 3/12/22, and 10/12/22.

The BSWA is delighted to present yet another workshop in the series on Early Buddhism. We will continue where we left off with the last workshop. This means we will focus on the eighth factor of the Noble Eightfold Path, right stillness, otherwise known as *sammāsamādhi* or *jhāna*. This concerns the deep states of peace that are one of the primary purposes of meditation practice.

The main focus of the workshop will be understanding the true nature of *jhāna* as presented by the Buddha. We will start off by discussing the place of *jhāna* on the Buddhist path. We will then look at a number of misconceptions and controversies that surround *jhāna*. Finally, we will discuss the *jhānas* in detail, including analysing the standard descriptions of the *jhānas* as found in the *suttas*.

Lesson Plan:

Time	Plan
08:30 – 10:15	Session 1 (Live Streamed)
10:15 – 12:00	Lunch
12:00 – 12:30	Breakout Session
12:30 – 14:30	Session 2 (Live Streamed)

General Reading:

Ajahn Brahm: Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond (Also known as Happiness Through Meditation) - Part of the book is available [HERE](#)

Bhante Sujato: [A Swift Pair of Messengers](#)

Course Content

Day 1 (26/11): *Sammāsamādhi*: Context and definition

- Outline of course
- Purpose of this course: what *sammāsamādhi* (right stillness) is and its importance
- Place of *sammāsamādhi* on the path ([MN 117](#))
- The Buddha discovers *jhāna* ([AN 9.42](#) + [MN 36](#))
- Importance of *samādhi/jhāna*
 - “*Samādhi* is the path” ([AN 6.64](#))
 - *Samādhi* is a core factor of the Dhamma ([DN16](#))
 - *Samādhi* is the essence of the spiritual life ([AN 4.29](#))
 - *Samādhi* = *jhāna*
 - *Samādhi* and *jhāna* in all traditions and *suttas*

- The similes used to describe importance of *jhāna* ([MN64](#))
- *Samādhi*: meaning, etymology, and translations
- Definition of *sammāsamādhi*
 - Standard *jhāna* definition ([SN 45.8](#))
 - Alternative definition ([MN 8](#) + [MN 117](#))
 - Wrong stillness vs. right stillness
 - Fourth spiritual faculty ([SN 48.9](#))
 - *Jhāna* factors ([MN 43](#))
- How *jhāna* meditation works
 - Dependent liberation ([AN 10.1](#))
 - Seven factors of awakening ([SN 46.3](#))
 - *Samādhi* from mindfulness of breathing ([SN 54.7](#) + [MN 118](#)).

Day 2 (3/12): Controversies and misconceptions

- What do we do when there are disagreements of interpretation? ([MN 104](#))
- Various misconceptions
 - *Samatha* and *samādhi* are mystical, whereas *vipassanā* is rational
 - *Sammāsamādhi* is only calm without insight ([MN 31](#))
 - *Jhāna* is not necessary for stream-entry ([AN 10.3](#))
 - You get attached to *jhāna* ([MN 138](#) + [DN 29](#))
- Are there any alternative *samādhis* that can be used in place of *jhāna*?
 - Momentary stillness (*khaṇika samādhi*)
 - Access stillness (*upācāra samādhi*)
 - *Vipassanā jhāna*
 - Supramundane *jhāna*
- Buddha’s recollection of the first *jhāna*: why did he recall this experience, not those under the two teachers?
- Descriptions of *jhāna* (preparing for day 3)

Day 3 (10/12): Understanding the power and profundity of *jhāna*

- Detailed analysis of *jhāna* formulas ([SN 45.8](#))
 - “Secluded from the senses, secluded from unwholesome qualities” ([AN 6.73](#) + [MN 38](#) + [AN 9.33](#) + [AN 9.31](#) + [AN 9.38](#) + [AN 9.42](#))
 - The nature of rapture (*pīti*) and happiness (*sukha*)
 - “Body”, *kāya* ([MN 39](#) + [MN 119](#))
 - “Form”, *rūpa* ([MN 28](#))
 - Sound is a thorn to *jhāna* ([AN 10.72](#))
 - *Jhāna* blindfolds Māra ([MN 25](#))
 - *Jhāna* is at the end of the world ([AN 9.38](#))
- Can you think in *jhāna*? ([SN 41.8](#) + [AN 3.101](#) + [MN 117](#) + [MN 78](#))
- *Jhāna* “light” or *jhāna* “heavy”?
- *Sammāsamādhi* and the formless attainments

- *Samādhi* leading to *sammāñāṇa* and *sammāvimutti*: next workshop ([MN 117](#))