

Shwe Oo Min Sayadaw Ovada
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The 5 Enlightenment Factors

To have faith
To be healthy
To be straightforward
To make dedicated effort
To see the arising and passing away of Nama Rupa

1. To have faith means to have faith in the Buddha's Teachings. What did the Buddha teach? He taught,
"Do not push away the sense objects – the defilements that arise because of these sense objects are what you have to remove."

Sight, sound, smell, taste, touch – these are only sense objects. **For example**, lobha, dosa and moha should not be allowed to arise because of some sound. Sounds should help to develop Sati, Samadhi, Pañña (Nana).

In the same way smells, tastes, touch (physical sensations) should not be allowed to lead to the development of defilements. **For example**, you don't avoid taste. When you come into contact with taste sense-objects, if you enjoy the taste, indulge yourself in it, you are indulging in greed (lobha). If you don't like the taste, therefore you reject it – you are indulging in anger (dosa).

We should avoid these 2 extremes and walk the Middle Path (Majjhimapatipādā) of Sati, Samadhi, Nana, thus maintaining a simple awareness of the taste.

These objects and the consciousness (knowing mind) are just natural phenomena. We should not see it as me or mine. We should try to see that they are happening of their own accord and passing away constantly. And to be able to see correctly, as it is, know and understand this, you have to watch with awareness.

That's what the Buddha was saying. This is what is meant by "to have faith" in the Buddha's Teachings. And with this faith you have to strive to practise.

2. To have good health – you must know how to keep yourself healthy. You don't discard clothing. To protect against heat and cold, to maintain propriety and decency, you have to use clothes. The attachment to greed for, and pleasure-seeking in, clothes is what you must discard. The disliking dosa mind you must also discard. How you discard/remove lobha and dosa is by having Sati and Nana, being mindful each and every time you dress yourself. When you are aware, you have already removed lobha and dosa.

Every time you eat, eat with mindfulness. Eat with wisdom. Eat what is suitable for you. Eat moderately.

3. To be straightforward – practise honestly, be willing to say what you know and say what you don't know. Don't pretend to practise. Practise wholeheartedly!
4. To make dedicated effort – practise without resting, without pause. There must be effort to practise. In meditation only mental viriya (effort) is important. We are not talking about physical effort. Practising continuously is what you call Viriya.

Viriya = preventing defilements that have not yet arisen, from arising
= to still the akusala that have already arisen
= to cultivate kusala (Sati, Samadhi, Nana) that has not yet been cultivated
= to increase the kusala that already exists

To do all this is the work of Viriya.

(akusala = unwholesome thoughts/speech/actions, kusala = wholesome ones)

5. To see the arising and passing away of Nama Rupa you must be able to see the Paramattha nature of Nama Rupa.

If these five factors are fulfilled, you can see and understand the Dhamma.

SADHU! SADHU! SADHU!

TRANSLATOR: MOUSHUMI GHOSH

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: IT IS HOPED THAT READERS WILL OVERLOOK ANY SHORTCOMINGS AND UNINTENTIONAL ERRORS IN THIS TRANSLATION AND INSTEAD BENEFIT FROM THE ESSENCE OF SAYADAW'S INSTRUCTIONS.