

Food for Thought

The following points were brought up during many Dhamma discussions with dozens of yogis. Some of them were beginners, others were already very experienced practitioners. Depending on your personal level of meditation experience, you may or may not understand some of these points. Don't worry about those you don't understand yet. Just allow them to sink in. Over time, as your practice unfolds, their meanings will become apparent and you will understand them at deeper and deeper levels. As your meditation progresses, you will eventually understand them all. These points are not arranged in any particular order, so just read a few at a time whenever you feel a need for some input or for some inspiration.

1. Meditation is not just about sitting on a cushion. No matter what posture you are in, if your mind is aware with understanding, you are meditating.
2. If you can't observe, don't force yourself to do it. Learn how to relax, how to be comfortable first.
3. Try lying down meditation every now and then. Learn to develop awareness in whatever posture you are in. Always remain aware of your experience and notice the difference in mental effort needed to maintain awareness in different postures.

4. Right effort means perseverance. It does not mean focusing hard, controlling, forcing or restricting yourself. Focusing hard arises from greed, aversion, or ignorance of the practice.
5. You can be aware of bodily sensations, mental feelings, and mental activities. But do not think of them as 'mine'; they are just what they are: sensations are sensations, feelings are feelings, mental activities are mental activities – that is their fundamental nature. Always try to observe them with this view in mind; if you don't, i.e. if you experience them as 'mine', attachment or aversion will inevitably arise.
6. Learning to observe, investigate and understand the nature of an object is more important than just wanting to see it disappear or trying to make it disappear. Wanting the object to disappear is wrong attitude.
7. When there are no defilements in the watching mind, you have right mindfulness.
8. The knowing mind (*viññāṇa*) is the mind that cognizes whatever comes to the sense doors. It is always present but it can neither recognize nor interpret; it has no wisdom, no understanding of what is going on. The knowing mind simply senses objects.
9. The observing or watching mind observes whatever you experience. When you are aware that you are observing, you are aware of the observing mind.
10. You can only become aware of the mind through the presence of its activities and feelings. Whenever you are aware of thinking

or that there is anger, disappointment, desire etc., you are aware of the mind. You need to recognize that it is the mind which is doing or feeling all this.

11. When you interfere with the watching mind, insight cannot arise. Learn to watch objectively, with bare attention.
12. When you observe your mind, you will be surprised, amazed and possibly even shocked to discover fixed ideas, wants, fears, hopes, and expectations which you have not been aware of.
13. All worldly activities (e.g. reading, listening to music, playing sports) involve thinking and conceptualizing. Without it, external stimuli (objects) become meaningless. But if conceptual thinking comes up during meditation, you should simply be aware that 'the mind is thinking'.
14. When you can easily stay with an object it is either because of the gross nature of the object, or because your mindfulness is strong. Don't be content with observing gross objects only. Your mindfulness will become stronger as you learn to observe subtle objects.
15. The moment you start disliking someone, an imprint or data is created within your mind. The imprint then causes you to see that person in a fixed way and prevents you from seeing how he or she really is. This is delusion at work.
16. When the mind is ready for insight, it will arise naturally, spontaneously. Don't look or hope for insight to arise. Looking for it will lead to false creations of the mind.

17. Always keep an open mind about whatever you experience. Try not to jump to conclusions. Simply keep observing and investigating your experience thoroughly and continuously. Jumping to conclusions will prevent your understanding from deepening.
18. If you keep avoiding difficult situations, you cannot learn and grow. This is especially true for dealing with the defilements. Learning to face the defilements allows you to investigate and understand their nature, and this will help you to transcend them.
19. Learn to be interested in difficult situations. By being present with them in a gentle manner, you may suddenly understand what caused them.
20. Feelings need not be identified or categorized as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral. Remind yourself that a feeling is just a feeling. Accept it just as it is.
21. When watching a movie, all members of the audience will perceive it in their own way, from their personal perspective. Those with a relatively immature mind may view the movie as pure entertainment. Those with a more mature mind will also try to understand the message in it. In meditation too, you should always try to understand what is happening.
22. The more you concentrate or focus on an object, the more energy you use. This makes the practice difficult and tiring. Your mindfulness may actually slacken. When you then become aware of this, you will probably try hard to build up the level of mindful-

ness again. Which, of course, means using even more energy, and this snowball effect burns you out during a long retreat.

23. When you put in too much effort to be mindful, you will spend your energy too quickly and therefore you will not be able to maintain mindfulness throughout the day. If you practise in a relaxed way, you will conserve energy and be able to practise for long periods of time. If you are a long term meditator you cannot afford to waste your energy. Meditation is a life long undertaking; it is a marathon, not a 100 metre dash.
24. See each and every moment as a valuable opportunity for the development of awareness but do not take the practice too seriously. If you are too serious about it, you become tense and are no longer natural.
25. Once you know how to relax, you become sensitive to your own needs. You will then know when you are using energy unnecessarily, and also learn to conserve your energy.
26. After you have heard or read about other people's meditation experiences, you might, consciously or unconsciously, be on the lookout for them. Then if you experience something similar, you might jump to the conclusion that it is an insight. But you have only had a similar experience. An insight is true understanding of reality.
27. The wandering mind is a natural mental activity. If we keep pushing it away we are not accepting what's natural. Once we accept this, i.e. have the right attitude, watching the wandering mind becomes easier. In the beginning you may often lose your-

self in thought, but that is okay. Over time and with practice, you will start observing the wandering mind as ‘just thoughts’ and get lost in it less and less often.

28. Don't resist, don't expect – accept things as they are.
29. The wandering mind is not the problem; your attitude that it should not be wandering is the problem. The object is not really important; how you observe or view it is important.
30. What you are observing or where you are observing it is not important; your awareness of it is important.
31. Every moment is the right moment for meditation.
32. The purpose of samatha is to attain certain mental states, whereas vipassanā is a journey of learning and understanding.
33. Mindfulness meditation can be compared to watching a movie. You just sit back, relax and watch. The storyline of what you are watching will naturally unfold – and how much you learn from what you watch depends on your level of understanding.
34. If you don't have the right attitude, then one way or another, your mind is defiled.
35. Insight per se is not so important; what is really important is whether or not the insight leads to a transformation in your mind which will enable you, in future, to handle similar situations without defilements.
36. When there are defilements in your mind, you have to recognize and acknowledge their presence. But it is also important that you are aware of the absence of defilements!

37. Understanding is not linear. You can understand things in different ways, on different levels and from different angles.
38. Wisdom inclines towards the good, but is not attached to it. It shies away from what is not good, but has no aversion to it. Wisdom recognizes the difference between skilful and unskilful, and it clearly sees the undesirability of the unskilful.
39. Delusion can cause you to see things upside down; it makes you see what is wrong as right, and what is right as wrong.
40. Avoiding difficult situations or running away from them does not usually take much skill or effort. But doing so prevents you from testing your own limits and from growing. The ability to face difficulties can be crucial for your growth. However, if you are faced with a situation in which the difficulties are simply overwhelming, you should step back for the time being and wait until you have built up enough strength to deal with it skilfully.
41. The purpose of practising is to grow in wisdom. Growth in wisdom can only happen once we are able to recognize, understand, and transcend the defilements. In order to test your limits and to grow, you have to give yourself the opportunity to face the defilements. Without facing life's challenges, your mind will remain forever weak.
42. Developing awareness is a life long journey. There is no need to hurry or worry. It is important to practise in the right way, so that whatever you learn will be useful in daily life, not just in the meditation centre.

43. The more you try to see something, the less clearly you can see it. Only when you are relaxed can you see things as they are. Those who don't try to look for anything, see more.
44. Strong mindfulness is not some kind of power. Mindfulness is strong when the defilements are not present, when you have the right attitude.
45. Know what attitude you are observing with. Observing alone is not enough.
46. If the pain you suffer from is caused by a physical injury or disorder – be careful not to aggravate it.
47. Sometimes, when things become difficult, the mind is reluctant to observe or practise. Depending on your ability and state of mind either continue to be aware or just stop and rest mindfully.
48. In life you should learn not to expect anything in return for whatever you do for others. With the work of awareness too, you should learn not to expect any results or good experiences.
49. It is of utmost importance to recognize pride in order to weaken it and prevent it from growing stronger. Wisdom can only arise when pride is put aside.
50. Holding on to a preconceived idea or view of what insight should be like is dangerous, as it leads to pride when you have an experience that seems to fit such an idea. The nature of reality is beyond ideas and views. Ideas and views are merely the work of delusion.

51. Don't confine the practice to the retreat centre; apply it in daily life. When you leave the retreat, take the practice with you.
52. When the mind is strong and comes into contact with an object, it does not judge; it understands the object just as it is.
53. Try to observe how the mind deals with a difficult situation as often as you can, from as many different angles as possible. Once you have developed an understanding of how the mind works in this situation, wisdom will naturally begin to do its work. Next time you are faced with a similar difficult situation, wisdom will prevent you from reacting in an unskilful way. Wisdom knows what to do.
54. When you start to watch thinking, you cannot recognize it as the mind. You are only aware of thinking and the contents of thinking. Through practice, through repeated looking at thinking you will get to understand that it is the mind that is thinking. This is not easy to describe in words. But once you are able to do this, you can observe the mind objectively. You just recognize it as thoughts that appear in the mind. Learn to acknowledge thoughts whenever they arise. Don't try to avoid doing this by keeping your awareness on the body only; you may miss the nature of how the mind works.
55. When your mindfulness is strong and continuous, you will naturally start watching subtle objects. Being able to stay with subtle objects causes the strength of mindfulness to increase further, thus enabling you to watch even more subtle objects. The ability to watch subtle objects develops gradually; you will not achieve it by forcing yourself to be mindful or by trying

hard to watch them. (Note: Strong mindfulness is used to describe a state of mind in which the Five Spiritual Faculties of faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom are in balance – a state of mind that has been developed through the momentum of persistent practice.)

56. It is not difficult to be aware or mindful. It is difficult to maintain it continuously. For this you need right effort, which is simply perseverance.
57. To be relaxed and in the right frame of mind is of prime importance. Everything else comes later. To recognize whether or not you are in the right frame of mind is more important than experiencing peaceful states or having a 'good sit'.
58. If you are sleepy every time you sit, you have developed a bad habit. So when sleepiness begins, open your eyes. If it persists, get up and walk. It does not matter whether you sit or walk; it is important that the mind is awake.
59. Right effort is reminding yourself to be aware. Right effort is not about using energy to focus on an object.
60. If tiredness sets in towards the evening, you possibly used excessive energy during the day. Your practice should gain momentum; you should not suffer from exhaustion. So don't use excessive energy trying to be more mindful; simply keep reminding yourself to be mindful.
61. When you close your eyes to meditate, you may get the impression that there is suddenly a lot of thinking. But the mind is actually thinking all the time. You just do not notice it because

when your eyes are open you are paying more attention to external objects than to thoughts.

62. To be able to maintain any skills you have acquired, you need to continue practising them. So keep up your meditation practice. Try to practise wherever you are, as much as you can. Keep persevering and don't let what you have learned go to waste.
63. If you are aware, just be glad that you are aware. That is the right attitude. So when you are confronted by a defilement and are aware of it, be glad that you are aware of this defilement, even if it does not seem to dissolve. As long as you are aware of the defilement, you are doing well.
64. Defilements are part of the Dhamma. Do not reject them. A yogi got disappointed when the defilements quickly disappeared. Not that she wanted the defilements but she was very keen to learn from them, to understand them. This should be your attitude when you are faced with defilements.
65. Try to recognize that defilements are simply defilements; that they are not 'your' defilements. Every time you identify yourself with them or reject them, you are only increasing the strength of the defilements.
66. Always remember that it is not you who removes defilements – wisdom does the job. When you are continuously aware, wisdom unfolds naturally.
67. After someone has stolen something from you, don't try to tell yourself that you don't really mind and that it was a form of giving. That is a trick of the mind. Recognize and accept your

annoyance! Only if you can watch your annoyance directly and understand it, will you be able to totally let go of it.

68. The experience of calmness is not so important. It is more important to know and understand why calmness does or does not arise.
69. To know reality you have to be courageous. If you wish to arrive at the truth you have to start meditating, to be aware of yourself. The first thing you need to acknowledge is that there are defilements in your mind. This is basic. We all want to be good and we therefore tend to see and show only our positive sides. If we do not face the defilements we end up 'lying' to ourselves and others. If you want to change for the better you must know your negative sides. When you start seeing yourself in a realistic way and acknowledge both your good and bad qualities, you are doing well.
70. The Buddha did not say that we should not think, talk or act; what he said was that, instead of being driven by the defilements, we should apply wisdom when thinking, talking, and acting.
71. When you are in conversation you have the habit of putting your attention outside, of getting involved with the topic of conversation and the people you are talking to. Most of the time you are too concerned with other people's emotions. Train yourself to continuously look inwards; you will naturally become more and more skilful at it. Also train yourself to remain aware of your attitude. Only to the extent that you are no longer emotionally involved in the conversation will understanding

arise. You will begin to recognize your limits, know when it is time to stop talking, know what you should or should not talk about, and know how to communicate without getting involved emotionally.

72. When you are watching an object, you should check the awareness again and again. Doing so allows you to become aware of the awareness of the object – learn to observe the watching mind.
73. Once you become more experienced in meditation, you will start thinking that you understand what it is about. But jumping to such a conclusion will prevent you from deepening your understanding.
74. When your experience in meditation widens and deepens, you will tend to make conclusions about the nature of your experience. You may even assume that you have understood a fundamental truth, such as impermanence. This kind of assumption will prevent you from looking deeper and will hinder further progress.
75. If you are able to notice subtle impulses in the mind you will also see their subtle motivations and realize that most of these motivations are defilements.
76. Do not decide how long you are going to sit; that will create time stress. Do not take the schedule at the retreat centre too seriously. Simply remind yourself to maintain awareness in all postures as continuously as possible.
77. When you are eager to make progress you will not be fully

aware of the present. That is why it is so important to keep checking your attitude. A yogi once said he had realized that his eagerness to apply right attitude continuously was a wrong attitude!

78. Every intention comes with a motivation. Most motivations are defilements. Only if you fully recognize and understand defilements, wisdom will arise. Now wisdom will motivate your intentions.
79. Intentions do not only occur at the beginning of every movement or action. There are intentions throughout each movement or action. Even every moment you are sitting has intentions. It is important to remember this.
80. Once you see the danger of the defilements you will always want to keep the mind in the most positive state possible.
81. It is the nature of the mind to be constantly in contact with objects, so you do not have to make a special effort to see an object. Just become aware of what is there and do not try to see what you think is the right object. There is no need to control or to manipulate your experience.
82. When people start meditating, they tend to have fixed ideas of how the practice should develop. But you do not need to do or create anything. You just need to develop continuous awareness, to watch and observe. That's all. You cannot make things happen, but when you develop awareness correctly, things will happen. The same is true for the arising of understanding, be it simple or deep, even enlightenment!

83. You can only work on the causes, not on the results. You cannot achieve what you want by just aiming for it. For example, it is not possible to develop concentration by just trying to concentrate. You need to know how concentration is developed. When mindfulness is continuously applied with the right attitude, concentration develops. You can actually only remind yourself to be mindful and check whether you are doing it with the right attitude. In other words, if you have right effort and right mindfulness, right concentration will come naturally. If you understand cause-effect relationships you will know how to deal with any situation. Always ask yourself if you know the causes and conditions that are necessary to achieve the result you want. Then work on fulfilling those causes and conditions. You need to have this right view.
84. Right mindfulness is not forgetting to be aware of the right object; right effort is to persevere; right concentration is stillness or stability of mind. The right object is your experience, for example the emotion of anger – NOT the person you are angry with.
85. Do not practise too seriously, but peacefully and respectfully.
86. If you think that you are watching the same thing over and over again you will become bored. However, if you take a closer look at your experience you will understand that no two moments feel exactly the same. What makes you feel bored is thinking that you are watching the same thing. In fact, nothing is ever the same, every moment is always new. Once you can really see this, your mind will always be interested in whatever

it observes. No moment will ever be boring because your experience will clearly show that 'things' are forever changing.

87. Thoughts influence the way you feel. How you view what you are doing is very important.
88. Someone who has understood the benefits of the practice will never stop practising. Those who stop have simply not understood the practice fully.
89. Whenever you get this feeling of not knowing what to do, just wait. Don't do anything.
90. Mindfulness is when the mind is full of awareness!
91. Awareness needs time to develop. In the beginning you have to keep reminding yourself to be aware, but when the momentum picks up you will remain aware naturally. You cannot force the awareness to become strong. Only by being aware continuously, momentum will be gained.
92. When the mind is pure, peaceful and equanimous, you will immediately notice any bodily tension caused by the arising of even very subtle defilements.
93. In order to understand defilements, you have to watch them again and again. What can you gain from just having or expecting good experiences? If you understand the nature of the defilements, they will dissolve. Once you are able to handle defilements, good experiences will naturally follow. Most yogis make the mistake of expecting good experiences instead of trying to work with the defilements.

94. Sometimes you may feel that being aware of certain objects is a waste of time. This idea is totally wrong. The key to the practice is the awareness itself, not the object. As long as you have awareness you are on the right track.
95. Learn to watch defilements as defilements and not as 'I am defiled'.
96. The quality of awareness should be accepted as it is. Problems arise when you have a preconceived idea of what awareness should be. If you do not accept the quality of your awareness, you have a wrong attitude and are most probably trying to have an imagined experience.
97. If you want to find the right balance you have to experience and understand the extremes.
98. You do not need strong effort to be mindful. When we are present, we become aware of what is happening. Simply reminding yourself to be in the present moment is all the effort you need to be mindful.
99. Once awareness gains momentum, being aware of the awareness will sustain the momentum.
100. When the mind is calm and peaceful and there is no obvious object to observe, take the opportunity to recognize the quality and strength of awareness of that moment.
101. If you become mature in your practice, you will be able to handle difficult situations simply because you understand the conditions behind them. Understanding the conditions enables you to work on the cause. Why not take difficult situations as learning opportunities?

102. It is important to notice assumptions. Assumptions are based on wrong views, and they will prevent you from seeing the true nature of things.
103. Vipassanā always steps back to see things more clearly, whereas samatha dives in and gets absorbed in the object. Stepping back and watching allows understanding to arise.
104. In the beginning you start off by just being mindful. Once you become skilled in consistently bringing the mind to the present moment, you can start to observe or investigate what you are aware of.
105. Thinking is within the mind. Peace too is within the mind. Understanding this allows you to watch them as mind objects rather than as something personal, as 'mine'. If you do not see peace as simply a state of mind, you will be drawn into it.
106. Checking your attitude is also awareness.
107. If you lose the desire to meditate or feel you do not know how to meditate, do not panic, do not try to make yourself meditate. Just remind yourself to relax. The desire to meditate will naturally come back after a while. Trying hard will just make things worse.
108. When a sense of resistance arises in the mind, learn to feel it directly.
109. Many people are reluctant to work with the bad experiences they have in their meditation. You can usually learn more from bad experiences than from good ones; in fact, very deep understanding can arise from working with bad experiences! Learn to accept both good and bad experiences.

110. It is important to have some theoretical knowledge, but you should hold it lightly. Beware of jumping to conclusions when you have an experience that seems to match the theory. Once you truly understand something experientially, you will see the vast difference between your initial interpretation of the theory and actual understanding.
111. You can only observe what you are experiencing in the present moment. You can neither observe what has not yet happened nor what has already passed.
112. Do not participate in what is happening. Learn to just be aware of it.
113. If you are aware of your awareness, you are meditating.
114. Let the mind naturally choose its object. You just need to be aware of the quality of your awareness.
115. If you are experienced in watching your awareness, you will be sure of its presence and, whenever you lose it for awhile, become aware of its absence.
116. Though it may be difficult for you to practise awareness in daily life you should still persevere. Sooner or later, even a small effort in mindfulness will make a noticeable difference in your life.
117. Looking for something which we think we are supposed to see is not mindfulness meditation. Mindfulness meditation is just being aware of whatever comes your way.
118. When you observe something, don't identify with it; don't think

of it as 'I' or 'mine'. Accept it simply as something to know, to observe, and to understand.

119. The work of awareness is just to know. The work of wisdom is to differentiate between what is skilful and unskilful.
120. Real acceptance and detachment are born of wisdom.
121. Whenever you have wisdom you are aware; but just because you are aware does not necessarily mean you have wisdom.
122. Always make it a point to check your attitude before you do sitting meditation. Be simple. Just sit and watch what is happening. Is it difficult to know what you are doing right now?
123. In the beginning wisdom comes a little later than awareness. However, over time, through practice, when you have developed wisdom, it arises simultaneously with awareness.
124. When things are good, learn how to detach from them. When things are not good, learn how to accept them.
125. In the beginning of the practice you may feel that there are too many things you need to watch, but when there is momentum everything seems to slow down and you will have enough time to watch it all, to see more details. It is like watching a moving train. If you stand close to a railway line watching a train move past you at high speed, you will mainly see movement and hardly any details of the train. But if you are on a moving train yourself and another train travels at a similar speed parallel to the one you are in, you will not see the train in its entirety but you will have enough time to see details.

126. If you are aware of your facial sensations during your sitting you will be able to know whether you are relaxed or not. When you are focusing too much it will show on your face. When a person is really relaxed, the face is very clear, soft and calm.
127. One thing you need to remember and understand is that you cannot leave the mind alone. It needs to be watched consistently. If you do not look after your garden it will overgrow with weeds. If you do not watch your mind, defilements will grow and multiply. The mind does not belong to you but you are responsible for it.
128. Excitement weakens mindfulness.
129. Lobha is an unwholesome volition, a defilement. Chanda is a wholesome volition, an expression of wisdom.
130. Be aware of peacefulness. Be aware of the awareness of peacefulness. Doing so allows you to check whether or not you are indulging in it, getting attached to it, or still aware.
131. When expectations arise in the mind, learn to see their nature. Every time you are upset or disappointed with someone, whenever you feel any resistance to the way things are, you can be sure that you have expectations.
132. Do not be led by greed. Take time to learn a little about greed. Pay attention to its characteristics. If you keep falling for greed, you will never understand its nature.
133. Many people believe that strong mindfulness is a kind of power. Actually, strong mindfulness is simply an awareness that is free from anxiety, expectations, or wants – a mind that is free from

concerns, that is simple and content. When you have these qualities, you can actually feel an increase of mindfulness. Strong awareness does not come about by trying very hard or trying to focus intently.

134. When you try to get rid of thoughts you are actually trying to control them rather than learning to understand them.
135. When your understanding of the true nature of things grows, your values in life will change. When your values change, your priorities change as well. Through such understanding you will naturally practise more, and this will help you to do well in life.
136. When you learn to talk with awareness in a relaxed manner, mindful of your intentions, your way of talking will become less emotional.
137. Only when you are ready and able to watch difficult emotions are you able to learn from them.
138. A wise and skilful person can turn poison into medicine. A skilled meditator can transform hindrances into understanding.
139. Throughout our life we habitually seek and grasp. To sit back and just watch this happening is difficult. However this sitting back and just watching is essential to become able to see and understand these habits.
140. When there is attachment or aversion in the mind, always make that your primary object of observation.

141. Only if the mind recognizes a wrong attitude can it switch to the right attitude.
142. When you are in a positive frame of mind, it is important to recognize it. Recognition tends to strengthen this wholesome state of mind.
143. Check your attitude before you attempt to watch sleepiness. If you resist it, meditation becomes a struggle. If you accept it, you will find it easier to make an effort to be aware.
144. To be able to observe things as they are without labeling is more real and effective.
145. If you are continuously aware of your state of relaxation you will become even more relaxed.
146. If you feel happy and at peace with yourself when you are on your own, make sure to check your attitude. If you become attached to solitude without being aware of it you will easily become agitated when your solitude is threatened.
147. If you target an object you complicate your practice. Targeting a particular object means that you have the fixed idea that this is the right object to observe for a set period of time. If your mind then turns to other objects, i.e. does what is natural instead of obeying your fixed idea, you will become agitated and disillusioned.
148. You should not be concerned whether you have good or bad experiences. You should only be concerned about your attitude towards these experiences.

149. When you start practising you have to keep reminding yourself that thoughts are just thoughts, feelings just feelings. As you become more experienced you will gradually understand the truth of this. But as long as you keep identifying with your thoughts and feelings, i.e. if you keep clinging to the view 'I am thinking' or 'I am feeling', you will not become able to see things as they are. You cannot see reality if you have a wrong view, if you see things through a veil of ignorance.
150. If you are aware of whatever you are doing, the mind will know its own limits.
151. When we think, speak or act with defilements, we will find ourselves again and again in saṃsāra. In the same way, when we think, speak or act with wisdom we will find our way out of saṃsāra.
152. If you are dissatisfied with your practice or if you are practising too seriously, you will not experience joy and calm.
153. If the mind is dissatisfied with the practice it is likely that you want something. You might then try to force the practice. This is not helpful.
154. If you do not understand the practice you will not be happy to practise.
155. Right practice brings joy and interest. Right practice brings benefits and the potential for living a meaningful life.
156. If you understand the practice and its benefits you will never have a boring moment.

157. It is perfectly natural to become sleepy. If you feel bad about sleepiness it means you have an aversion towards it and you will try to resist it. This is a wrong attitude. Simply recognize and accept sleepiness. As long as you observe sleepiness with the right attitude, you are meditating.
158. If you have no money you cannot become a businessman. You have to work hard if you want to make a living and save up some money. If you then invest this money wisely you will make more money. Similarly, when you are new to mindfulness meditation, you will often find it hard to practice continuously and to acquire some wisdom. If you know how to apply the wisdom you have, you will develop more wisdom.
159. In vipassanā the object serves as a means to help us develop right awareness, concentration and wisdom. If the mind reacts with any kind of defilement (*lobha*, *dosa*, or *moha*) you have wrong awareness and so concentration and wisdom cannot arise.
160. Do not try to avoid objects or experiences, try to avoid getting entangled in defilements.
161. You need to understand that everything that happens is just a natural manifestation of cause and effect. First try to accept things the way they are and try to see that 'this is not me', that this is just 'nature' at work. You need to acquire this kind of wisdom first. It is this wisdom that can eradicate the defilements.

162. Samādhi is not about being focused. Experiencing samādhi means the mind is still, stable, and calm.
163. The samatha yogi deliberately chooses an object. The vipassanā yogi observes what is happening and is therefore aware of many different objects. The samatha yogi gets attached to the object. The vipassanā yogi does not get attached to any object. Wisdom can only arise when there is non-attachment.